

CONTENTS

Theme: *With Heart and Mind*

Editorial – With Heart and Mind
page 195

Universalism and Evangelical Theology
DAVID HILBORN AND DON HORROCKS
page 196

Biotheology: Theology, Ethics and the New
Biotechnologies
BRIAN EDGAR
page 219

Glossolalia in Korean Christianity: An Historical Survey
BONJOUR BAY
page 237

Contextualization and Discipleship
MINHO SONG
page 249

Farewell Gerasenes: A Bible Study on Mark 5:1-20
JOHN LEWIS
page 264

Book Reviews
page 271

EVANGELICAL REVIEW OF THEOLOGY VOLUME 30, NO 3, July 2006

Evangelical Review of Theology

*Articles and book reviews reflecting
global evangelical theology for the purpose
of discerning the obedience of faith*



Volume 30 No. 3 July 2006



Evangelical Review of Theology

EDITOR: DAVID PARKER

Volume 30 · Number 3 · July 2006

Articles and book reviews reflecting global evangelical
theology for the purpose of discerning the obedience of faith

Published by



for
WORLD EVANGELICAL
ALLIANCE
Theological Commission

ISSN: 0144-8153
Volume 30 No. 3 July 2006

Copyright © 2006 World Evangelical Alliance Theological Commission

Editor

David Parker

Committee

The Executive Committee of the WEA Theological Commission
Dr Rolf Hille, Executive Chair

Editorial Policy

The articles in the Evangelical Review of Theology reflect the opinions of the authors and reviewers and do not necessarily represent those of the Editor or the Publisher.

Manuscripts, reports and communications
should be addressed to the Editor and sent to Dr David Parker,
17 Disraeli St, Indooroopilly, 4068, Qld, Australia

The Editors welcome recommendations of original or published articles or book reviews that relate to forthcoming issues for inclusion in the Review.
Please send clear copies of details to the above address.

Email enquiries welcome: tc@worldevangelicalalliance.com
<http://www.worldevangelicalalliance.com/commissions/theological.htm>

Typeset by Toucan, Carnegie House, Western Way, Exeter EX1 2DB
and Printed in Great Britain for Paternoster Periodicals,
PO Box 300, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 0QS
by Polestar Wheatons Ltd., Exeter, Devon.

Editorial: With Heart and Mind

In this issue we have pleasure in presenting a second group of papers from the joint Theological Commission-Korea Evangelical Theological Society consultation held in Korea, Sept 30-Oct 1, 2005. This Third International Conference on Evangelical Theology featured a large number of papers, some of which appeared in our April 2006 issue. Our opening article is an important presentation by Theological Commission member, Dr David Hilborn and his co-author David Horrocks, of a topic of contemporary interest—universalism, revealing the interesting history which this viewpoint has had in Evangelicalism.

In a rather different area, but just as important, is the groundbreaking exploration by another TC member, Dr Brian Edgar, of a new and comprehensive approach to bio-ethics. Dr Edgar takes account of the vastly increased scope that this quite new discipline needs to cover due to the extremely rapid growth of science recently in areas such as gene manipulation and stem cell research, rendering the older parameters of bio-ethics far too limited. Accordingly he presents an expanded set of guidelines for decision-making.

We then follow with two articles focusing on the Korean situation—first an informative survey of the development of glossolalia in the Korean context by Dr Bonjour Bay, casting a fascinating light on this phenomenon in his home country. In particular, he

presses for new creative theological thinking to reconcile official doctrinal positions on this matter with the realities of church practice—a process which has wider applicability than this particular topic.

Then we have a paper by Dr Minh Song on discipleship. Although not presented at our Conference, it provides soundly based practical advice on an issue that faces Christians everywhere. He argues that ‘Discipleship in context calls for an astute examination of the needs and issues of the context in light of the timeless and unchanging message of the Bible.... Discipleship in context is not an option, but an imperative.’

Concluding with this theme, our Bible study article by John Lewis focuses on the need for mission and witness to be related to our cultural context. So whether we look at views of the afterlife, the consequences of adventurous science or issues of spirituality and the call of discipleship, we know that ‘What is needed is God’s powerful love proclaimed and lived by God’s people as they live their faith in dialogue with surrounding communities, as they proclaim the Word and witness to the Spirit in prayer and ministry... We will only impact our communities so long as we proclaim and live the transformative, freeing and renewing power of God, which is the love of God in Jesus Christ.’

David Parker, Editor

Universalism and Evangelical Theology: An Historical Theological Perspective

David Hilborn and Don Horrocks

KEYWORDS: *Missions, evangelism, conversion, Pietism, Arminianism, Reformed Theology, Evangelical Alliance, Darwinism, election, salvation, final restitution*

Introduction: Thomas Talbott and The Possibility of 'Evangelical Universalism'

THE traditional view of universalism and evangelicalism is that they are mutually exclusive.¹ In a historical sur-

vey of universalism published for the British evangelical journal *Themelios* in 1979, Richard Bauckham associated the doctrine with 'less conservative' theologians, and barely mentioned anyone who could be classed as an evangelical.² Likewise, while charting the recent growth of more radical soteriologies among evangelicals, Daniel Strange has nevertheless concluded that 'even those evangelicals who are

1 Among numerous expressions of this traditional view, see Derek J. Tidball, *Who Are the Evangelicals? Tracing the Roots of Today's Movements* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1994), pp. 151-52; Alister McGrath, *A Passion for Truth: The Intellectual Coherence of Evangelicalism* (Leicester: Apollos, 1996), pp. 236-40;

Donald R. Dunavant, 'Universalism' in A. Scott Moreau (ed.), *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), pp. 988-89; James Davison Hunter, *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 47.

2 Richard J. Bauckham, 'Universalism: A Historical Survey', *Themelios* 4:2 (1979), pp. 48-54.

Dr David Hilborn (PhD Nottingham) is Theological Adviser to the UK Evangelical Alliance and an Associate Research Fellow of the London School of Theology. He has co-edited and co-authored several works, including *One Body in Christ, Faith Hope and Homosexuality*, 'Toronto' in *Perspective and The Nature of Hell*. He is an ordained Anglican minister and a member of the WEA Theological Commission. **Don Horrocks**, a former banker and management consultant, is Public Affairs Manager for the EA UK, and editor of *Transsexuality and Modifying Creation*. He holds a PhD in Historical Theology. This is a slightly edited version of a paper presented at the Third International Conference of Evangelical Theology, held at Sungkyul University, Anyang, Korea, Sept 30-Oct 1, 2005 and was originally published in *Universal Salvation: the Current Debate* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003) edited by Robin A. Pary and Christopher H. Partridge (used here by permission of the publisher).

very optimistic about the numbers of people who will eventually be saved still do not believe in universalism; for 'it is not a matter of degree to move from the belief that the majority of humanity will be saved to a belief that all will be saved, but a matter of kind'. In fact, Strange's assessment of the current scene leads him to declare that he knows 'of no published evangelical who holds to the doctrine of universalism'.³

Plainly, however, Strange's assessment begs the question whether there are *any* conditions under which an evangelical who did embrace universalism could continue to be classed as 'evangelical'—and if so, what those conditions might be. One such case is Thomas Talbott who teaches philosophy at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. Formed in a deeply conservative evangelical church community, he pursued graduate work at Fuller Seminary. Talbott's years at Fuller saw him radically reject the Calvinism in which he had been schooled—a rejection which led, in time, to the formulation of a dogmatic universalism driven by the eschatological imperative of 'love's final victory'.⁴

Where, as we shall see, certain evangelicals have tentatively envisaged a 'wider hope' for the unevangelised and others have extended a

broadly Arminian emphasis on freewill beyond the grave for those who do not hear the gospel in this life, Talbott maintains a Reformed emphasis on the fixed and eternal nature of God's salvific decrees, but dismisses the idea that these decrees entail a so-called 'double predestination'—that is, the election of some to everlasting life and others to hell. Talbott echoes familiar Reformed thinking when he states that while our choices in respect of the gospel 'most assuredly can affect our chances for happiness in the present and in the near term future', they 'cannot alter our final destiny'. But he starkly departs from Reformed understanding when he suggests that this 'final destiny' is the same for all—namely, a universally 'glorious inheritance' of 'union with God and reconciliation with others'. As Talbott expresses it in his main treatise on this topic, *The Inescapable Love of God*, 'when the Hound of Heaven has finally closed off every alternative to such a union, we shall then, each of us, finally embrace the destiny that is ours'.⁵

Now it should be acknowledged from the outset that Talbott himself does not offer a straightforward 'test case' for the possibility of 'evangelical universalism'—not only because he is relatively so dogmatic about the salvation of all, but also because he now seems fairly unconcerned about whether his own belief in universal salvation would disqualify him *ipso facto* from being categorized as an evangeli-

3 Daniel Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation among the Unevangelised: An Analysis of Inclusivism in Recent Evangelical Theology* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002), p. 31.

4 Thomas Talbott, *The Inescapable Love of God* (Salem: Universal Publishers, 1999), pp. 1-22, 219.

5 Talbott, *The Inescapable Love of God*, pp. 219-20.

cal.⁶ Even so, it is noteworthy that Talbott's various articles on universalism for *Faith and Philosophy*, *Religious Studies* and *The Reformed Journal* during the past decade have been concerned to engage and dialogue above all with evangelical scholars, and above all, to influence evangelical thinking on this topic.⁷ As such, Talbott's work prompts reflection not only on current evangelical theological thinking about universalism, but on the historical context of such thinking. In particular, it prompts consideration of whether there are precedents within the evangelical tradition both for the more specific universalist arguments which Talbott adduces, and for universalist soteriology in general.

I shall show here that from time to time, some who might *on certain*

grounds be defined as 'evangelical' have, in practice, held either universalist or universalistically-inclined views. Granted, it will also become clear that the grounds in question, and the precise mode or shade of universalism adopted in each case, may be debatable: as Jerry Root notes in a review of the subject for the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, there are 'about as many varieties of universalism as there are people writing about it'.⁸ Granted, too, we shall see that opinions differ as to which of these varieties, if any, might be compatible with an authentic evangelical theology. Yet since Talbott has been so active in provoking present-day evangelical debate on universalism, it would be helpful to examine ideas from his own evangelical lineage which to one degree or another might be said to prefigure the ideas that he is now propounding.

6 An attitude borne out, for instance, by Talbott's avowed dislike of institutional Christian labels, and by his decidedly unevangelical equivocation in describing the Christian faith as 'one of the principal sources—if not the principal source—of moral and spiritual enlightenment in the world'. (*The Inescapable Love of God*, p. 33) Indeed, Talbott's published work does not occupy itself much at all with the question of evangelical identity and its parameters.

7 E.g. with John Piper in 'God's Unconditional Mercy: A Reply to John Piper', *The Reformed Journal*, June 1983, p. 13; William Lane Craig in 'Craig on the Possibility of Eternal Damnation', *Religious Studies*, 28 (1992), pp. 495-519; Lorraine Boettner in 'Punishment, Forgiveness and Divine Justice', *Religious Studies*, 29 (1993), p. 157; Michael Murray in 'Universalism and the Supposed Oddity of Our Earthly Life: Reply to Michael Murray', *Faith and Philosophy* 18:1 (January 2001), pp. 102-109; Jerry Walls in 'Freedom, Damnation and the Power to Sin with Impunity', *Religious Studies* 37 (2001), pp. 417-434, (n.1, n.19).

Evangelicals and Universalism in the Post-Reformation Period

Just as Augustine laid the ground for the anathematising of universalism at the Second Council of Constantinople (553),⁹ the magisterial Reformers revealed their own considerable debt to Augustine when they robustly repudiated universalism. For Luther in par-

8 J.R. Root, 'Universalism', in Walter A. Elwell (ed.), *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (second ed) (Grand Rapids: Baker Book Academic, 2001), p. 1233.

9 John. H. Leith (ed.), *Creeds of the Churches* (Third Edition) (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1982), p. 50.

tical, universalism represented an offence against the cardinal principle of justification by faith alone. Without such justification by faith, he was adamant that it would be impossible for anyone to escape 'sin, death [and] hell'.¹⁰ Inasmuch as it had located salvation in cosmic restitution rather than the victory of Christ on the cross, the universalism systematised in the third century by Origen in his doctrine of *apokatastasis* contrasted starkly with Luther's theological foundations. Calvin's rejection of universal salvation took a somewhat different form, but the contrast was equally sharp. For Calvin, it denied that biblical process of election whereby God had chosen Israel from among the nations under the old dispensation, and had decreed in the new that only some had been predestined for everlasting bliss.¹¹

In noting all this, however, we should remember that the Reformation had a radical as well as a magisterial wing. This radical wing, as exemplified by the Anabaptists, did much to shape evangelicalism's distinctive practical emphases on personal conversion, holiness and discipleship. Indeed, as George Hunston Williams has shown, even among paedobaptist evangelicals in the magisterial Reformation traditions, it contributed to an ecclesiology

centred on the idea of the church as a covenanting community of the faithful.¹² Generally, this ecclesiology went hand-in-hand with the doctrine that only some, and not all, would be saved. Yet it was on the fringes of the same radical Reformation that universalism would re-emerge as a force to be reckoned with.

The South German Anabaptist Hans Denck (c.1495-1527), not only opposed paedobaptism: even before he formally joined the Anabaptist movement he was imprisoned at Schwyz in 1525 for promoting the Origenist doctrine that at the Last Judgement even Satan will be spared. On his release, Denck is reported to have been baptised by the German Anabaptist leader Balthasaar Hübmaier. Hübmaier himself never embraced universalism, but does seem to have been more generally influenced by Denck's emphasis on the universality of God's salvific will, and by his commensurate stress on the freedom of all to choose salvation.¹³ On some assessments, indeed, this is closer to what Denck himself actually taught.¹⁴

As it turned out, Denck's soteriol-

10 Martin Luther, 'Preface to the New Testament', in John Dillenberger, (ed.), *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings* (New York: Anchor Books, 1961), pp. 15-17.

11 John Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, Trans. F.L. Battles (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), III:24:xii-xvii, pp. 978-87.

12 George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation, (Third Edition)* (Kirkville: Truman State University Press, 2000), pp. 1289-1311; Keith G. Jones, *A Believing Church: Learning from Some Contemporary Anabaptist and Baptist Perspectives* (Didcot: Baptist Union of Great Britain, 1998).

13 Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, pp. 256-57.

14 Morwenna Ludlow, *Universal Salvation: Eschatology in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa and Karl Rahner* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 2.

ogy failed in any decisive way to penetrate those Mennonite and Hutterite movements which would subsequently develop as the main strands of Anabaptism. However, traces of it did resurface in the mystical writings of the German Lutheran, Jakob Boehme (1575-1624). Coloured by a theosophical interest in alchemy and astrology, Boehme's work attacked the Reformed doctrines of election and reprobation as incompatible with Scripture's portrayal of a God engaged in universal revelation and renewal.¹⁵ It would be hard to construe Boehme's idiosyncratic writings as 'evangelical', or even systematically universalist,¹⁶ but he was read extensively by others who did operate within more thoroughly evangelical theological contexts. Hence Peter Sterrey (1613-72), an English Independent minister who served as a chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, sought to co-opt Boehme's concepts into a detailed scheme of universal redemption, as did his protégé, Jeremiah White (1630-1707).¹⁷ Like Thomas Talbott today, both men insisted that the God whose supreme attribute is love would not finally withhold that love from any

of his creatures.¹⁸ Boehme would have an even greater impact, however, on the Pietists.

Universalism and Pietism

Pietism emerged in mid-seventeenth century Germany as a reaction against the increasing scholasticism of the Lutheran church, and the religious entanglements of the Thirty Years War (1618-48).¹⁹ This context helps to explain why some Pietists were inclined to explore the universalising visions of Boehme, even if they typically declined to infer universal salvation as such from them. Certainly, leading Pietists such as Philip Jakob Spener, August Hermann Franke and Nikolas von Zinzendorf all drew on Boehme's work.²⁰ Moreover, under the influence of such Pietists, and also prompted by one of Boehme's greatest champions, the English spiritual writer William Law (1686-1761), John Wes-

¹⁵ Robin Waterfield (ed.), *Jacob Boehme: Essential Readings* (Wellingborough: Crucible Books for the Aquarian Press, 1989).

¹⁶ Morwenna Ludlow, 'Universal Salvation and a Soteriology of Divine Punishment', *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 53:4 (2000), p. 459.

¹⁷ Jeremiah White, *The Restoration of All Things: or, A Vindication of the Goodness and Grace of God, to be Manifested at Last, in the Recovery of his Whole Creation out of Their Fall* (Third Edition, with additional preface) (London, 1779 [1712]).

¹⁸ White, *The Restoration of All Things*, p. 910; Sterrey, cit. D.P. Walker, *The Decline of Hell* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 111. Compare Talbott, *The Inescapable Love of God*, pp. 200-220.

¹⁹ For more detail on the origins and development of Pietism see W.R. Ward, 'German Pietism, 1670-1750', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 44 (1993), pp. 476-504.

²⁰ The precise effect of Boehme on these Churchly Pietists is, however, a matter of scholarly dispute: see Rufus S. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London: Macmillan, 1914), pp. 153ff; Chauncey David Ensign, 'Radical German Pietism' (Boston: Boston University Th.D. thesis, 1955), p. 21; Ernst Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965), pp. 10ff.

ley would go on to study him in some depth. Admittedly, Wesley was far from convinced by Boehme's mysticism, and followed Spener, Franke and von Zinzendorf in resisting his universalist tendencies.²¹

Yet Wesley did strongly promote the work of another Lutheran Churchly Pietist who was at least discreetly prepared to embrace universalism—the biblical critic Johannes Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752). Bengel's groundbreaking exegetical study *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* was much consulted and admired by Wesley.²² What was less well known was that while publicly upholding orthodox Lutheran soteriology, Bengel privately inclined towards a doctrine of universal reconciliation. Bengel's reticence to publish his views is explained by Helmut Thielicke as stemming from the conviction that 'not everybody was ready' for such a doctrine: 'If it came into the hands of the wrong person—the person who would construe it legalistically—it would have a devastating effect. This effect would be much the

same as that of untimely preaching of predestination. Improperly understood, this too could be taken fatalistically...'²³

The same tension between private universalism and public orthodoxy was a feature of the moderate German Pietist grouping founded in 1708 by Alexander Mack and known as the New Baptists, or Brethren (now called the Church of the Brethren). Particularly among those of this grouping who settled in colonial America from 1719 onwards, universal restoration was well known. Yet as Donald Durnbaugh notes, it was never officially preached, lest it detract from the Brethren's traditional evangelical emphases on conversion, personal sanctification and social activism.²⁴ Insofar as it was disseminated at all, it seems to have been promoted on the Brethren's behalf by leaders belonging to a more overtly radical stream of Pietism.

Here, figures such as Johann Wilhelm Peterson (1649-1727), Ernst Christoph Hochmann von Hochenau (1670-1721) and George de Benneville (1703-93) married a more separatist mindset with more explicitly Boehmistic ideas, and were happy on this basis to promulgate final cosmic restoration—a doctrine which, as David Ensign

21 Writing in 1752, Wesley reflected: 'The mystic divinity was never the Methodists' doctrine. They could never swallow...Jacob Behmen [aka Boehme], although they often advised with one that did [William Law]'. John Wesley, Letter to Bishop Lavington (Exeter), 8 May 1752, in John Telford (ed.), *The Letters of John Wesley*, A.M., (8 Vols.) (London: Epworth Press, 1931), Vol. 3, p. 321.

22 Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), p. 188; 'Bengel, Johannes Albrecht', in F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Second Edition) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 158.

23 Helmut Thielicke, *The Evangelical Faith: Volume III—The Holy Spirit, the Church, Eschatology* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1982 [1973]), p. 455.

24 Donald F. Durnbaugh (ed.), *Meet the Brethren* (Elgin, Ill.: The Brethren Press for the Brethren Encyclopaedia Inc., 1984), p. 9.

25 Ensign, *Radical German Pietism*, pp. 285-86.

notes, would become a 'major distinctive' of Radical Pietism.²⁵ Another member of this set, the German writer George Klein-Nicolai, pseudonymously penned in 1700 a pamphlet entitled *The Everlasting Gospel*, which appears to have been taken to America by the first Brethren émigrés, and which was in effect the first universalist tract published in the New World.²⁶

If the Brethren formed something of a bridge between moderate and radical Pietism, this role was confirmed by the fact that although Hochmann would later plough his own ecclesial furrow, he worked closely with Mack at the inception of the movement, and drafted a statement of faith which it used extensively in both Germany and America for several decades.²⁷ Similarly, while De Benneville was an avowed separatist who went on to emigrate and found his own independent house church in Oley, Pennsylvania, his services nevertheless attracted a wide range of Pietists—right wing, left wing and moderate alike.

No doubt, part of his appeal to the more 'evangelical' members of his congregations was his own tireless evangelistic zeal. Confounding the later stereotype that universalists lack motivation for mission, De Benneville insisted on the obligation of any who believe in final restitution to 'proclaim

and publish to the people of the world a Universal Gospel that shall restore, in time, all the human species without exception'. To leave people ignorant of this grand divine plan was, for De Benneville, to deprive them of the essential ground, joy and purpose of their life. Hence, as he put it: 'My happiness will be incomplete while one creature remains miserable'.²⁸

A similar conversionist zeal characterised two English universalists who emerged from the archetypally evangelical stable of Methodism. James Rely (1722-78) and his disciple John Murray (1741-1815) reflected John Wesley's interest in Pietism, but unlike Wesley, followed those strains of it which pointed to the final redemption and restitution of all. Wesley's embrace of Arminian soteriology may have led him to assert that in God's providence all *could* be saved because Christ died for all and not, as in classical Calvinism, for the elect alone; Rely and Murray, however, interpreted Romans 5:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:22 to mean that Christ's death had *in fact* atoned for all, and saved all, on the grounds that the universality of Adam's sin in humanity must be matched by nothing less than the universality of humanity's salvation in the New Adam, Jesus Christ.²⁹ In this, they

²⁶ James Alexander, 'Universalism among the Early Brethren', *Brethren Life and Thought*, XXXII, Winter 1987, p. 29.

²⁷ Richard V. Pierard, 'Hochmann Von Hochenau, Ernst Christoph', in J.D. Douglas (ed.), *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), p. 473.

²⁸ Cit. Bell, *The Life and Times of Dr. George De Benneville*, 1953, p. 62.

²⁹ James Rely, *Union: Or a Treatise of the Consanguinity and Affinity Between Christ and His Church*, (London 1759); John Murray, *The Life of Rev. John Murray, Preacher of Universal Salvation, Written by Himself, with a Continuation by Judith Sargent Murray* (Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1870).

foreshadowed the treatment of the same Pauline texts offered by Thomas Talbott in chapter 5 of *The Inescapable Love of God*.³⁰

Relly was expelled from the Methodist Connexion for these views in 1751, and established a sect which Murray joined. In 1770, Murray emigrated to New England, and at Barnegat Light, New Jersey, later that year preached a sermon which paved the way for the establishment of the first church to style itself as explicitly 'Universalist', rather than as incidentally or implicitly drawn to universal restoration—a church which he helped to found in 1793 as the Universalist Society of Boston.

Once officially formed in this way, the Universalist Church appears to have been less inclined to check itself against the doctrinal orthodoxy of mainline Protestantism in general, and of evangelical Protestantism in particular. This turn from orthodoxy was embodied by Hosea Ballou (1771-1852)—a former Calvinistic Baptist who was ordained as a Universalist minister in 1794. Freed from catholic and credal constraints, Ballou's theological explorations led him, in time, not only to deny the punitive fires of hell, but also to disavow the Trinity, the deity of Christ and vicarious atonement.

As Harry Skilton has observed, 'When Ballou arrived on the scene, most Universalists were orthodox in theology, except for their belief that all men would be saved. But his extensive preaching, writing, and training of min-

isterial students, influenced them towards Unitarianism.'³¹ This confluence of Universalism with Unitarianism—culminating as it did much later with the formation of the Unitarian Universalist Association in 1961—can be seen to account in no small measure for the growing resistance of evangelicals to universalism and final restitution through the nineteenth century.

Universalism and Evangelicalism in the Nineteenth Century

While various seventeenth and eighteenth century universalists came from evangelical backgrounds, and while some managed to remain discreetly within mainstream evangelical churches, universalism itself was hardly seen as compatible with evangelical belief. Indeed, as intentional universalist churches multiplied, and as universalist thought gained influence through the succeeding century, evangelicals distinguished themselves as those most vigorously opposed to incipient universalism, and to the unitarian theology with which it became increasingly yoked.

There is not time here to rehearse the many polemics written by traditionalist evangelicals against universalism in the nineteenth century.³² However, one momentous episode from the history of the organisation for

31 Harry Skilton, 'Ballou, Hosea', in J.D. Douglas (ed.), *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), p. 98.

32 But see Geoffrey Rowell, *Hell and the Victorians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974).

30 Talbott, *The Inescapable Love of God*, pp. 55-80, esp. 56-66.

which I work illustrates very clearly the depth of evangelicalism's retrenchment on this and related issues during this era. Keen to establish its doctrinal rectitude from the outset, the inaugural conference of the World's Evangelical Alliance in 1846 included a specific affirmation of 'the eternal punishment of the wicked' in its Basis of Faith. This clause was inserted partly in response to universalism, and partly to repudiate the spread of annihilationalist views under unitarian sponsorship.³³ Yet in 1869-70 the Alliance was shaken to its core after one of its Honorary Secretaries, T.R. Birks, published an esoteric study called *The Victory of Divine Goodness*.³⁴

An Anglican priest, Birks had distinguished himself as a leading opponent of Darwinism. In this volume, however, he argued for a 'semi-restitutionist' view in which those consigned to hell might yet develop some sense of the new divine order, eventually possessing part, if not all, of its glory. Placed under intense pressure after a succession of fraught Alliance debates on the matter, Birks resigned his secretaryship. Even this, however, was not enough to prevent the departure of a significant number of the Alliance's Council, in protest at the fact that Birks was not also publicly censured

for his views.³⁵

If the 'Birks Affair' typified mainstream evangelical hostility to even quasi-universalist theology during this era, Birks was not quite alone among evangelicals in seeking to apply the benefits of the gospel to those who have died without professing Christ. More positive evangelical responses to universalism were certainly rare, but there were exceptions, and these exceptions are important—not least insofar as they offer pointers to the modern-day debate which Thomas Talbot has stoked up.

Like Birks, F.W. Robertson of Brighton (1816-53) was an evangelical who came to favour a 'remedial' process of purgatorial sanctification over penal retribution—a process which he saw as extending beyond the grave, and which he defended on the premise that 'the law of the universe is progress'.³⁶ More significant, however, was the similarly 'progressivist' soteriology developed by the Scottish lay theologian Thomas Erskine of Linlathen (1788-1864). Along with his friend John MacLeod Campbell, Erskine was honoured by the respected Tübingen scholar Otto Pfliegerer for having made the 'best contribution in dogmatics' from Britain between 1825 and the early 1890s.³⁷ More pertinently for our present topic, however, he stands out as one of the very few seri-

33 Hilborn and Johnston, *The Nature of Hell* (ACUTE Report) (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000), pp. 63-4.

34 T.R. Birks, *The Victory of Divine Goodness* (London: Rivingtons, 1867).

35 For a full account of the 'Birks Affair' see Ian Randall and David Hilborn, *One Body in Christ: The History and Significance of the Evangelical Alliance* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001), pp. 122-133.

36 A. Brooke Stopford (ed.), *Life and Letters of Fred. W. Robertson*, Vol. II (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co., 1882), pp. 155-6.

37 Otto Pfliegerer, *The Development of Theology in Germany Since Kant and its Progress in Great Britain Since 1825* (2nd Edition) (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1893), p. 382.

ous, consistent, self-declared universalists of the nineteenth century who nevertheless sought to maintain an evangelical identity.³⁸

Erskine was one of the first British theologians to undertake theological fact-finding tours of Europe following the end of the Napoleonic wars, and it was on these trips that he came under the influence of key German theologians who were following in the footsteps of Friedrich Schleiermacher.³⁹ Rejecting the Augustinian-Calvinist defence of eternal damnation, Schleiermacher asserted a new eschatology based on the election of all humanity to salvation in Christ. More specifically, he sought to assimilate Platonist, Romantic and pantheist concepts within a doctrine of final restoration which stressed the ability of human beings ultimately to recover from the deleterious effects of sin. In this respect, he effectively further radicalised that 'left wing' German Pietist tradition which had leant towards universalism in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁴⁰

Erskine's theological formation was not, however, exclusively continental. His preferred reading as a youth had

included the essays of the General Baptist theologian, John Foster (1770-1843). One of the most intellectually gifted evangelicals of his time, Foster regarded eternal punishment as unjust, and developed a doctrine of progressive universal redemption based on God's unfolding 'education' of all those made in his image.⁴¹ Certainly, Erskine read Foster's Book, *On a Man Writing Memoirs of Himself*, at the age of 17, and realized, as a kind of spiritual awakening, that life was a school, and that education was for eternity.⁴²

If Foster was an early inspiration, Erskine's soteriology was also profoundly shaped by William Law.⁴³ We have already seen how influentially Law championed Boehmist and Pietist concepts in the eighteenth century, and have noted his importance as a mentor to John Wesley.⁴⁴ Erskine read Law assiduously, quoting from his later mystical works and tracking down his sources—not least in the writings of Boehme.⁴⁵ Indeed, having been thus

38 For more on Erskine's evangelical credentials see Don Horrocks, 'The Soteriological Eclecticism of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen: Theological Innovation in an Age of Reconstruction', (Ph.D., Brunel University, 2001) (due for publication by T&T Clark, 2003.)

39 Horrocks, 'Soteriological Eclecticism', p. 254ff.

40 Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), §5, 18-26; §76. 3, 317; §81. 1, esp. 333; §81.4, 338, §89. 1, 366.

41 Nicholas R. Needham, *Thomas Erskine of Linlathen: His Life and Theology, 1788-1837* (Edinburgh: Rutherford House Books, 1990), p.29; Leroy Edwin Froom, *The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers: Volume 2* (Washington: Review and Herald, 1966), pp. 318-20.

42 John Foster, *Essays* (London: The Religious Tract Society: nd).

43 Horrocks, 'Soteriological Eclecticism', pp. 207-13.

44 Leslie Stephen, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century (Third Edition)* (London: Harbinger Books, 1962 [1867]), Vol. 21, pp. 331, 344.

45 See e.g., Henry F. Henderson, *Erskine of Linlathen: Selections and Biography* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1899), pp. 26-30.

inspired to read Boehme in the original German, Erskine developed a noticeably Boehmistic theodicy, which cast the religious life as a universal, moment-by-moment struggle between good and evil instincts, played out in a process of purification and reconciliation with God. This process was presented by Erskine as culminating in the eventual defeat of evil by good, and the victory of God's final purpose.

Following Law, Erskine invoked Romans 5:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:22 to argue that corporate humanity should be understood in terms of the terms of 'the two heads, Adam and Christ,—each being the head of all men, and therefore all men having a part in each; Adam being the corrupt fountain, and therefore rejected, Christ being the renewed fountain, and therefore elected'.⁴⁶ In this, he anticipated Thomas Talbott's plain assertion that 'the very same "all" who died in Adam shall be made alive in Christ'.⁴⁷

Even more pertinent for present-day evangelical debates about the scope of salvation, however, was Erskine's concept of a 'post-mortem dimension', in which the journey of faith was seen as continuing for all beyond the grave.⁴⁸

One of the more intriguing trends in current evangelical theology is the growing number of evangelical theologians since the 1960s who have either endorsed or seriously entertained the concept of 'second chance' or 'post-mortem' evangelism. This group now includes, at least, George Beasley Murray, Charles Cranfield, Donald Bloesch, Clark Pinnock, Gabriel Fackre and Nigel Wright.⁴⁹ Like Millard Erickson, I suspect that the group will grow—although whether any its living members move on to fuse the wider hope which their sympathies represent with actual universalism—as Erskine did—remains to be seen.⁵⁰

In addition to his 'softening' of Scottish Reformed soteriology, Erskine also significantly influenced the later

⁴⁶ Thomas Erskine, *The Doctrine of Election* (London: James Duncan, 1837), p.305.

⁴⁷ Talbott, *The Inescapable Love of God*, p. 64.

⁴⁸ Thomas Erskine, *Essay on Faith* (Edinburgh, 1822), p. 91. Erskine admitted that, because from everyday observation the divine process of education into righteousness was not generally evident, it was logically necessary for him to extend the process for an infinite period into post-mortem experience: Thomas Erskine, *The Spiritual Order* (Edinburgh, 1871), pp. 69-70, 75.

⁴⁹ G.R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), p. 258; C.E.B. Cranfield, *First Epistle of Peter* (London: SCM, 1954), p. 91; C.E.B. Cranfield, 'The Interpretation of 1 Peter 3:19 and 4:6', *Expository Times*, 69 (September 1958), p. 372; Donald Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology, Volume 2* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), pp. 226-28; Clark H. Pinnock, 'The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions', in Mark A. Noll & David F. Wells (eds), *Christian Faith and Practice in the Modern World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), pp. 165-67; Gabriel Fackre, 'Divine Perseverance', in John Sanders (ed.), *What about Those Who Have Never Heard? Three Views on the Destiny of the Unevangelized* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 1995), pp. 71-95; Nigel Wright, *The Radical Evangelical: Seeking a Place to Stand* (London: SPCK, 1996), pp. 99-102.

⁵⁰ Pinnock, for one, strongly resists identification of each doctrine with the other.; Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), p. 170.

nineteenth century holiness movement—a movement which was steeped in German Pietist thought and peopled by figures with known universalist inclinations. His work was certainly read and discussed by those who attended the landmark Broadlands conferences, which began just after his death, in 1873, and which continued until 1888.

One such attendee was Andrew Jukes (1815-1900). Jukes had been an Anglican clergyman in Hull, but had subsequently joined the Plymouth Brethren. In 1867, he published a book entitled *The Restitution of All Things*, which spurred considerable soteriological controversy. Notably, Jukes cited both Erskine and Law in support of his position.⁵¹ Like Erskine, he disavowed the notion that ‘God can only save men through Christ in this present life’. Rather, citing texts such as John 12:24, Romans 6:3-5 and 2 Corinthians 11:12, Jukes construed death not as a ‘point of no return’ for the impenitent, but as a potential gateway into a new form of life in Christ. Jukes conceded that those impenitent would still undergo judgement: indeed, he averred that this would consign them to the ‘lake of fire which is the second death’, as described in Revelation 20:14. For Jukes, however, the fire in question was understood as purgatorial rather than either endlessly punitive or terminally destructive.

On this basis, he repudiated both the traditional view of hell and the

increasingly popular concept of annihilation for the unredeemed. Furthermore, as a variation on Erskine’s post-mortem evangelism, he proposed that in God’s restitution of the cosmos, those who have known Christ prior to judgement might, as the ‘Firstfruits’, minister salvation to those who have not hitherto believed. Jukes had been well regarded by the Brethren for several ‘orthodox’ works on the Bible, but this somewhat esoteric defence of universalism lost him a great deal of support, and he latterly returned to the Church of England.⁵²

Thomas Talbott does not mention Jukes in any of his published defences of universalism; indeed, he cites very few historical precedents for universal salvation from within his own evangelical tradition. An important exception, however, is a novelist and spiritual writer who also became a popular speaker at Broadlands: the Scottish Congregationalist George MacDonald (1824-1905).⁵³ Talbott pays particular tribute to MacDonald’s *Unspoken Sermons*, recognizing in them a template for his own version of universalism.

MacDonald promulgated universal-

52 Jukes, *The Restitution of All Things*.

53 MacDonald travelled to Linlathen especially to meet Erskine, who approved of his work. See letters from Erskine to MacDonald (undated) in Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University: General MSS 103, Box No.2, Folder No.68.

54 Talbott, *The Inescapable Love of God*, pp. 12-15; George MacDonald, *Unspoken Sermons* (London: Longman, 1886); *Lilith: A Romance* (London: Ballantine, 1971); Rolland Hein, *The Harmony Within: The Spiritual Journey of George MacDonald* (Chicago: Cornerstone Press, 1999).

51 Andrew Jukes, *The Restitution of All Things*, (W. Knochaven, California: Scripture Studies Concern and Concordant Publishing Concern, 1976 [1867]), p. 190.

ism, too, in popular fantasy epics like *Lilith*.⁵⁴ He was raised in a strongly Calvinist home, was ordained in 1851, and was linked with various evangelicals throughout his life. Later, he was commended by C.S. Lewis, who did not finally embrace his universalist outlook, but who took the epigraphs for his best-selling books, *The Problem of Pain* and *The Great Divorce* from MacDonald, and who drew extensively from his insights on the last things.⁵⁵ Despite all this, it should be noted that MacDonald was dismissed after just two years in pastoral charge for his unorthodox views.⁵⁶

Along with MacDonald, Talbott does also briefly mention the nineteenth century Princeton theologian Charles Hodge (1797-1878).⁵⁷ Potentially this is fascinating, for although Hodge was in many respects a classical Calvinist, he applied the Calvinistic principle of unconditional election 'universally' to children who die in infancy. As Hodge saw it, 'The Scriptures nowhere exclude any class of infants, baptised or unbaptised, born in Christian or heathen lands, of believing or unbelieving parents, from the benefits of redemption in Christ.'⁵⁸ Indeed, building on the 'private judgements' of the eighteenth century evangelical Anglicans John Newton and Augustus Toplady, Hodge argued that the death

of a child in infancy was, *ipso facto*, proof of their inclusion in the 'election of grace'.⁵⁹ More specific warrant for this view was adduced by Hodge from Romans 5:18. As he read this text, 'All the descendants of Adam, except Christ, are under condemnation; all the descendants of Adam, except those of whom it is expressly revealed that they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, are saved.'⁶⁰

This position was also adopted by Hodge's protégé, Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921). Alongside his combative defences of the Westminster Confession and biblical inerrancy, Warfield echoed Hodge's statements on this matter in an extended essay published in 1897 as 'The Development of the Doctrine of Infant Salvation'.⁶¹ More recently, other Reformed theologians, including Roland Nash and Lorraine Boettner, have expanded on Hodge and Warfield's position, contending that since our final judgement is conducted on the basis not of our sinful *condition* as members of fallen humanity, but on the basis of the sinful *deeds* we commit 'in the body' (2 Cor. 5:10), morally unaware infants cannot be condemned to hell. Indeed, Boettner has concluded strikingly that this in itself ensures that the population of heaven may well

55 C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (London: Fount, 1977 [1940]); C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce: A Dream* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1946).

56 Hein, *The Harmony Within*.

57 Talbott, *The Inescapable Love of God*, pp. 60, 77, 119.

58 Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), pp. 26-27.

59 Hodge, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1*, pp. 26-27. John Newton, *Works, Volume 4* (London, 1808), p.182; Augustus Toplady, *The Works of Augustus Toplady* (London, 1837), pp. 645-46.

60 Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology, Volume 1* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), pp.26-27.

61 Benjamin B. Warfield, 'The Development of the Doctrine of Infant Salvation', in *Two Studies in the History of Doctrine* (New York: Christian Literature Co, 1897), pp. 143-239.

comprise over half of all those who have ever lived (i.e., who have ever been conceived).⁶² As it is, Warfield's own paedo-universalism contributed to his suggestion that 'the number of the lost in comparison to the whole number of the saved will be very inconsiderable'.⁶³

Oddly, Talbott ignores all this and instead critiques those points in Hodge's more general exegesis of election and salvation which resist his own, unqualified universalism.⁶⁴ Yet Hodge's position on infant death ought not to be overlooked in our context, for while it is very specific and limited in its application of universalist principles to one quite particular group, the bases on which it rests could, at least theoretically, be extended to other groups who cannot necessarily express faith in Christ for themselves—for example, those with severe mental disabilities and those who have not had an opportunity to hear the gospel. Nash accepts the former while resisting the latter, but other evangelicals, like Gabriel Fackre and John Sanders, have certainly sought to

extrapolate from the 'universal' salvation of infants and the mentally disabled to a radically inclusive view of salvation for godly members of other faiths—if not to the absolute universalism advocated by Talbott.⁶⁵

Evangelicals and Universalism in the Past Century

Possibly the most important conduit of universalistic influence on evangelicals in the past hundred years or so is a scholar who was neither fully aligned with evangelicalism nor finally committed to Talbott's style of dogmatic universalism—namely, Karl Barth (1886-1968).

Evangelical scholars continue to debate the nature and extent of Barth's universalist sympathies, and whether in this sense his thinking on hell and salvation is compatible with an evan-

⁶² Roland H. Nash, *When a Baby Dies: Answers to Comfort Grieving Parents* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), pp. 60-65; Lorraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1992), pp. 145-46.

⁶³ Benjamin B. Warfield, 'Are They Few That Be Saved?', in *Biblical and Theological Studies* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1952), p. 350. This is also due to Warfield's postmillennial optimism about a major surge of conversions in the generations prior to Christ's return.

⁶⁴ Talbott, *The Inescapable Love of God*, pp. 60, 77, 119.

⁶⁵ For a summary of arguments supporting this view, see John Sanders, *No Other Name: Can Only Christians Be Saved?* (London: SPCK, 1992), pp. 61, 70, 206, 231-32, 287-305.

⁶⁶ For discussion of this debate see John Colwell, 'The Contemporaneity of Divine Decision: reflections on Barth's Denial of "Universalism"', in Nigel de S. Cameron (ed.), *Universalism and the Doctrine of Hell* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1992), pp. 139-60. See also Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *Introduction to the Theology of Karl Barth* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), pp. 97ff.; G.C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), pp. 290ff; *Return of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 390; D.G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology (Vol. 2)* (San Francisco: Harper Row, 1979), pp. 224ff.; D.A. Carson, *The Gaggling of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Leicester: Apollos, 1996), pp. 143-44.

gical perspective.⁶⁶ The debate is a complex one, but centres on an apparent tension in Barth's recasting of the Reformed doctrine of election. Barth is keen to redefine the 'double decree' proposed by John Calvin, whereby God predestines certain individuals to heaven and others to hell. Recognizing the potentially dualistic and 'arbitrary' strains in this view of election, Barth seeks to reconfigure it by focusing not on the eternal fate of particular human persons, but on the redemptive person and work of Jesus Christ.

From the Pauline concept of our being 'in Christ', Barth construes a soteriology in which the Son himself is elected *on our behalf*. As the universal 'elected man', his election is at once both an election to damnation (as he is accursed for us on the cross) and to eternal life (as his death makes atonement for the sin of the cosmos and as he is raised to glory). By concentrating divine damnation on the cross in this way, Barth argues that what appears to be God's reprobation is in fact an act of 'rejecting love'. Moreover, being divine, this act is so pervasive in its effect that there is no 'hiding' from it: all are implicated in the redemption it achieves:

For in [God's] union with this one man [Jesus Christ] He has shown His love to all and His solidarity with all. In this One He has taken upon Himself the sin and guilt of all, and therefore rescued them all by higher right from the judgment which they had rightly incurred, so that He is really the true consolation of all. In Him He is our Helper and Deliverer in the midst of death. For in the death of this One it has

taken place that all we who had incurred death by our sin and guilt have been released from death as He became a Sinner and Debtor in our place, accepting the penalty and paying the debt.⁶⁷

While this undoubtedly looks like universalism, it must be understood in terms of an ontic or 'objective' change which still calls for noetic uptake—that is, a response of faith. What is either unclear, or so complexly wrought that it has appeared unclear to many evangelicals since, is the extent to which Barth understands this faith-response to be decisive in *effecting*, rather than merely *disclosing*, divine salvation for any particular person.

Given the cosmic scope of election 'in Christ', Barth is mostly reluctant to envisage the possibility that anyone might either reject it or be rejected from it. At certain points, however, he does appear to countenance such rejection on the grounds that God's all-encompassing love must be a love that liberates people to isolate themselves from his reach if they are insistent on so doing.⁶⁸ As Barth sums it up: 'To the man who persistently tries to change the truth into untruth, God does not owe eternal patience and therefore deliverance.' The doctrine of final restitution, or *apokatastasis*, may have appeal in terms of 'theological consis-

⁶⁷ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics III.2*, Trans. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957), p. 613.

⁶⁸ Barth, *Church Dogmatics III.2*, pp.186ff., 602-40. For more detail on this see Colwell, 'Divine Decision', pp. 146-60.

tency', but to insist upon it is, for Barth, to risk 'arrogating to ourselves that which can be given and received only as a free gift'.⁶⁹

As Roger Olson notes, Barth has particularly influenced 'self-identified progressive evangelicals who reject fundamentalism and liberal theology', and who have found in the Swiss theologian a way through the Scylla and Charybdis which they perceive these two modes of thought to represent.⁷⁰ Prominent among the first wave of these 'progressive' evangelicals were Bernard Ramm (1916-92) and Donald Bloesch (1928-).

A conservative Baptist, Ramm spent a sabbatical year under Barth at Basel in 1957-58 and thereafter sought to assimilate his insights into a self-consciously evangelical framework.⁷¹ While upholding not only the reality of hell, but also the validity of preaching it from time to time,⁷² Ramm's absorption of Barth nevertheless clearly prompted him to shift from the tradi-

tional emphasis placed on damnation by evangelicals:

Every sensitive evangelical is a universalist at heart. He agrees with Peter when he wrote that 'the Lord...is not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance' (2 Pet. 3:9). In perhaps that passage of Scripture which represents the sovereignty of God the strongest—Romans 9—God's attitude towards Pharaoh is that he endured him with much patience (Rom. 9:22). The idea that God is as much glorified by the damnation of the lost as by the salvation of the saints as held by some Calvinists is hard to reconcile with Ezekiel 18:23: 'Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, says the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?' No person on the face of the earth wants everybody in heaven more than an evangelical. Only an evangelical really knows in depth the meaning of sin, the wrath of God, the reconciliation of the cross, the victory of the resurrection, the tragedy of judgment, and the glory of the New Jerusalem. Every person who fails of this final beatitude can only be of pain to him.⁷³

Ramm's implication that hell awaits only those who persistently resist God's call is reflected and intensified in the work of Bloesch. Schooled in Reformed and Lutheran Pietism by a father who ministered in the German evangelical Church at Bremen, Indi-

69 Barth, *Church Dogmatics IV.3*, Trans. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1961), p. 477.

70 Roger E. Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition and Reform* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 1999), p. 589.

71 For a biography and review of Ramm's work, and a discussion of the influence of Barth on his thought, see Kevin J. Vanhoozer, 'Bernard Ramm', in Walter A. Elwell (ed.), *Handbook of Evangelical Theologians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), pp. 290-306. Also Millard J. Erickson, *The Evangelical Left: Encountering Postconservative Evangelical Theology* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997), pp. 23-28.

72 Bernard Ramm, *The Evangelical Heritage: A Study in Historical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1973), p. 72.

73 Ramm, *The Evangelical Heritage*, pp. 136-37.

ana, Bloesch was later profoundly shaped by Barth's thinking while studying at Chicago Theological Seminary in the 1950s. He has since projected Barth's soteriological optimism beyond the grave, into post-mortem evangelization, and even into a qualified form of restitutionism:

We do not wish to put fences around God's grace...and we do not preclude the possibility that some in hell might finally be translated to heaven. The gates of the holy city are depicted as being open day and night (Isa. 60:11; Rev. 21:25), and this means that open access to the throne of grace is possible continuously. The gates of hell are locked, but they are locked from within...Hell is not outside the compass of God's mercy nor the spheres of his kingdom, and in this sense we call it the last refuge of the sinner. Edward Pusey voices our own sentiments: 'We know absolutely nothing of the proportion of the saved to the lost or who will be lost; but this we *do* know, that none will be lost, who do not obstinately to the end and in the end refuse God'.⁷⁴

Another American theologian from the evangelical Reformed community who has argued for the salvation of all but those who intentionally and finally reject God, is Neal Punt. In a series of studies beginning with his 1980 volume *Unconditional Good News*, and con-

tinuing through *What's Good about the Good News?* (1988) to *So Also in Christ* (2002), Punt has set out a case for what he calls 'biblical universalism'. Central to this case is Punt's contention that all persons are elect in Christ except those whom the Bible explicitly confirms will be eternally lost—namely, those who consistently repudiate or maintain conscious indifference towards God's revelation of himself in gospel presentation, in creation or in the witness of conscience.⁷⁵ In Punt's terms, 'For those who are finally lost, the Bible reveals no other cause than their own wilful, persistent unbelief and sin. For those who are saved, it is God alone who graciously, sovereignly elects and saves them'.⁷⁶

Hence for Punt, election to salvation remains unconditional and by grace alone, as in classical Calvinism; but eternal condemnation is recast as conditional upon sinners' wicked works. In other words, humans cannot earn their salvation—but some humans do earn their damnation. Like Hodge and Nash, Punt dismisses as unscriptural the concept that anyone is destined to hell solely because of their solidarity with Adam, and the original sin which accrues from that solidarity. Rather, he argues, they fail to 'inherit the kingdom' on the basis of their own 'actual, wilful and persistent sin' (cf. 1

⁷⁴ Donald Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology Vol. 2* (San Francisco: Harper, 1979), pp. 226-28. For another 'progressive' evangelical similarly influenced by Barth, see Richard Quebedeaux, *The Worldly Evangelicals* (San Francisco/London, 1978), p. 152

⁷⁵ Neal Punt, *So Also in Christ: Reviewing the Plan of Salvation* (Northland Books, 2002), p. 83.

⁷⁶ Neal Punt, *What's Good about the Good News? The Plan of Salvation in a New Light* (Northland Books, 1988), p. 44.

Cor. 6:9-10; Rev. 22:15).⁷⁷

Punt's thesis is perhaps weakest in the area that concerns Talbott most: the area of theodicy. Specifically, he appears to leave unresolved the *inevitability* or otherwise of the persistent, wilful sinning committed by persistent, wilful sinners. Is such sinning chosen purely by those few who in doing so deliberately forfeit the election to heaven they once shared with everyone else on the basis of Christ's 'universal' redemption? Or is such sinning foreknown, and/or foreordained by God? Punt stresses that 'no one conceived and born in sin has the capacity within himself or herself to choose the good', but maintains, in true Reformed fashion, that goodness is imputed by Christ.⁷⁸ Yet the logical consequence of his position is that this imputation must either be ineffective in the case of those who finally reject God, or else actively withheld from them by God in the first place. Either option presents a considerable moral problem for a system which claims to be so thoroughgoing in its assurance of 'good news'.

A somewhat different universalist apologia appears in the Dutch Reformed scholar Jan Bonda's magnum opus, *The One Purpose of God*, published by Eerdmans in 1993.⁷⁹ Bonda bases his position on a close exegesis of Paul's Letter to the Romans. For example, chapter 3:29-30 of the epistle is interpreted as confirming that God means to save all people—not just

those who believe, but all Jews and all Gentiles. The final salvation of Israel, which Bonda infers particularly from chapter 11 and takes to include Jews who refuse the gospel, is, he says, a clear indication of God's universalistic purpose for the world as a whole. Hence the 'coming of the kingdom' in the New Testament is applied to the time when God will draw all—dead and alive—back to himself. Bonda readily concedes the same problems of human freedom and salvation with which Talbott grapples, but unlike Talbott, is thereby led towards a hopeful, rather than an absolute universalism—one based on a general rather than a 'limited' model of atonement.

Just as Bonda develops his universalism from a particular text of Scripture, so with the growth of systematic universalist theologies across various traditions in recent years, evangelical biblical scholars have been led to re-investigate the key verses cited in defence of the view that all will be saved. The majority of such evangelical exegetes, from N.T. Wright to I. Howard Marshall, have ended such investigations by reaffirming the traditional distinction between the salvation of some to eternal life and the condemnation of others to hell.⁸⁰ A few, however, have been persuaded that certain texts do genuinely point in a

⁷⁷ Punt, *So Also in Christ*, p. 83.

⁷⁸ Punt, *So Also in Christ*, pp. 60-61.

⁷⁹ Jan Bonda, *The One Purpose of God: An Answer to the Doctrine of Eternal Punishment* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).

⁸⁰ N.T. Wright, 'Towards a Biblical View of Universalism', *Themelios* 4:2 (January 1979), pp. 55-58; Ian Howard Marshall, 'Does the New Testament Teach Universal Salvation?' in John Colwell (ed.), *Called to One Hope: Perspectives on the Life to Come* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000), pp. 17-30.

universalist direction.

Writing for broadly evangelical publishers like Word and Baker Books, Andrew Lincoln has inclined towards the view expressed so firmly by Talbott, that the Pauline texts most often cited in defence of the universalist position—Ephesians 1:10, Romans 5:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:22-28—do, in fact, envisage a universal salvation.⁸¹ Similarly, Richard Bell—a New Testament scholar in the evangelical Anglican tradition—has developed his earlier Pauline studies to argue in a recent paper on Romans 5:18-19 that since Paul believes all human beings participate both in Adam's sin and in Christ's 'righteous act', a universal salvation is affirmed there.⁸² This is, claims Bell, 'the natural reading of the text and the context supports it'.⁸³

Indeed, Bell goes on to suggest that these two verses do not bear an isolated witness to universalism: as he puts it, '2 Cor. 5:19 speaks of God being in Christ, reconciling the world to himself [and] Phil. 2:11 says every

tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.'⁸⁴ Bell concedes, however, that such universalist teaching is 'clearly at variance' with other parts of Romans—most notably 11:25-32, which implies the condemnation of at least some Gentiles, even while affirming a full salvation of Jews.⁸⁵

In attempting to explain and resolve this difference, Bell suggests that Romans 5 offers an a-temporal, mythical representation of the reconciling act of Christ, whereas Romans 9-11 is more immediately focused on the historical contingencies of Paul's missionary project. Hence, while the earlier text assumes the perspective of eternity, in which God will eventually reconcile all people and all things to himself, the later text is seeking to account for the fact that some of the Gentiles to whom Paul has been sent are *currently* rejecting his message, and is not occupied by whether or not they might eventually be saved:

...Rom. 9-11 is concerned with the bringing of the reconciling word to human beings through the mission of the Church: Rom. 10:8 speaks of the word which creates faith...and 10:14-18 is about the necessity of bringing the gospel to Jews and Gentiles... Rom. 5:18-19, on the other hand, has as its central focus the reconciling act of Christ (and the act of Adam which brought enmity between God and man). And Paul in speaking of this reconciling

81 Andrew Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet: Studies in the Role of the Heavenly Dimension in Paul's Thought, With Special Reference to His Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991) [Originally Cambridge University Press, 1981]; *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary 42 (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), pp. 32-44. See also, Andrew Lincoln and A.J.M. Wedderburn, *The Theology of the Later Pauline Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

82 Richard Bell, 'Rom. 5:18-19 and Universal Salvation', *New Testament Studies*, 48 (2002), p. 417.

83 Bell, 'Rom. 5:18-19 and Universal Salvation', p. 427.

84 Bell, 'Rom. 5:18-19 and Universal Salvation', p. 429.

85 Bell, 'Rom. 5:18-19 and Universal Salvation', p. 430.

act of Christ which brings justification for all does not trouble himself here with the problem as to how the reconciling word is actually brought to human beings. Again, his perspective is mythical rather than historical.⁸⁶

If all this is evidence that certain reaches of evangelical scholarship may be edging towards universalism, it also recalls the central problem which I raised at the beginning of this paper, and which must attend any account of 'evangelical universalism'—namely that for most evangelicals, and for many non-evangelicals besides, the very concept itself is an oxymoron. However conservative a person's background and theological formation has been, the historic evangelical norm is that once that person embraces universalism, he or she *de facto* forfeits any authentic claim to the description 'evangelical'. The same outlook also tends to hold that however orthodox someone may be in other areas, affirming universalism effectively cancels out their evangelical credit, and leaves them short of the doctrinal standard required to belong to the evangelical constituency. In this sense, while those we have cited as 'evangelical universalists' may be defined as evangelicals *historically* and *socio-culturally* in relation to their background, education and church allegiance, many would argue that they cannot be regarded as evangelical in a *theological* sense once they have advocated universalism.

We have already mentioned that

while Strange shows modern-day evangelicals adopting a range of positions on the fate of the unevangelized—from restrictivism through universal opportunity and inclusivism to post-mortem evangelism—he reports that universalism has no recognized place within evangelicalism's bounds. In this, he is undoubtedly reflecting a broad consensus—a consensus underlined by Gregory Boyd and Paul Eddy's recent study, *Across the Spectrum: Issues in Evangelical Theology*. Boyd and Eddy also list evangelical proponents of views stretching from restrictivism to post-mortem salvation, but implicitly bracket universalism off with that pluralism which sees all religions leading to God, and which, as far as they know, is 'universally rejected by evangelical Christians'.⁸⁷

In 2000, the UK Evangelical Alliance's report *The Nature of Hell* acknowledged the possibility of salvation for at least some who have not heard the gospel, and while finding 'no convincing warrant in Scripture' for post-mortem regeneration, did at least recognize certain advocates of it to be genuine evangelicals.⁸⁸ However, when it came to universalism, the verdict was far harsher—it was not only 'divergent from authentic evangelical faith', but would seriously undermine the integrity of any evangelical who

⁸⁶ Bell, Richard, 'Rom. 5:18-19 and Universal Salvation', p. 431.

⁸⁷ Gregory A. Boyd and Paul R. Eddy, *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), p. 179. Discussion of 'The Destiny of the Unevangelized Debate' as a whole is on pp. 178-92.

⁸⁸ Hilborn and Johnston, *The Nature of Hell*, pp. 89-92.

advocated it while claiming still to be an evangelical.⁸⁹ The key reasons given for this assessment echoed numerous critiques of universalism offered by evangelicals down the years: it trivialises the radical sinfulness of fallen humanity, and plays down the penalties due for such sin; it compromises morality by denying that good or evil choices make any ultimate difference, and undermines the missionary mandate of Christ by implying that evangelism and conversion are incidental to salvation.⁹⁰

The Alliance report did envisage that some of those evangelical theologians who had embraced 'wider hope' and 'post-mortem' models might in time move further, towards outright universalism.⁹¹ But such a prospect was hardly welcomed. Indeed, it was viewed with a concern similar to that expressed by Millard Erickson seven years previously, when he had suggested that the more radical evangelical soteriologies of John Sanders, Gabriel Fackre, Clark Pinnock and others might become routes through which universalism could pass into evangelical terrain.⁹²

As things stand, however, it needs to be stressed that Sanders, Fackre

and Pinnock themselves remain opposed to universalism. No doubt Sanders takes a very optimistic view of the population of heaven, and envisages various means other than explicit faith in Christ by which people can be saved, but he finally excludes the universalist position as unbiblical, and thus, unevangelical—albeit 'with regret'.⁹³ Fackre may advocate post-mortem evangelism, but he dismisses universalism on the basis that even when faced with the risen Christ after death, some may choose to reject him.⁹⁴ Likewise, Pinnock maintains from his ultra-Arminian perspective that 'universal salvation is implausible chiefly because God takes no for an answer'.⁹⁵

Despite all this, the review which we have conducted here confirms that determining whether anyone might be defined as a *bona fide* 'evangelical universalist' depends as much on what is meant by the term 'universalist' in any particular instance, as on what is meant by the term 'evangelical'. A little before attesting that he knows of no published evangelical who has embraced universalism, Daniel Strange tellingly writes: 'I do not believe that "universalism" can be a credible option for evangelicals of

89 Hilborn and Johnston, *The Nature of Hell*, pp. 32, 131.

90 Hilborn and Johnston, *The Nature of Hell*, p.31; cf. Edwin Blum, 'Shall You Not Surely Die?', *Themelios*, 4:2 (1979), pp. 58-61.

91 Hilborn and Johnston, *The Nature of Hell*, p. 34.

92 Millard J. Erickson, *The Evangelical Mind and Heart; Perspectives on Theological and Practical Issues*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1993), pp. 150-52.

93 John Sanders, *No Other Name? Can Only Christians Be Saved?* (London: SPCK, 1994), pp. 106-115.

94 Gabriel Fackre, 'Divine Perseverance', in John Sanders (ed.), *What About Those Who Have Never Heard?* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1995), p. 95.

95 Clark H. Pinnock and Robert C. Brow, *Unbounded Love: A Good News Theology for the 21st Century* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1994), p. 89.

whatever background'. He then adds that 'any serious evangelical theologian whose ultimate authority is Scripture, cannot ignore the clear passages which refer to the reality of judgement and hell and the prophetic element which declares that some will never come to repentance'.⁹⁶ Hence, when Strange posits his apparently unoccupied category of 'evangelical universalists', he is in fact positing something which, on his very own terms, is at best an abstraction and at worst an impossibility, since to advocate universalism is from his perspective to deny evangelicalism—or at least to present evangelicalism in an 'incredible' or 'non-serious' way.

Strange does at least implicitly concede that not all universalisms are of the 'dogmatic' sort represented by Talbott: he defines Barth, for instance, as a 'quasi-universalist'.⁹⁷ Yet since Strange also asserts that any 'quasi-universalism' which strongly hopes that all will be saved also 'goes against too much biblical evidence to the contrary', it is unclear from his viewpoint which, if any, of the various more subtle gradations of universalism we have surveyed here, might still be deemed 'evangelical'.

Would T.R. Birks' palliative semi-restitutionism qualify? Significantly, while he resigned as an Honorary Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, he was maintained on the Alliance's membership roll. What of Andrew Jukes, who wrote many other 'sound' volumes as a member of the Brethren, and even

in *The Restitution of All Things* maintained a place for divine condemnation, hellfire, protracted punishment and the 'second death', albeit as means to *apokatastasis* rather than eternal reprobation? What of Punt's 'biblical universalism', which Strange does not mention, but which is clearly far from absolute, and which on his criteria probably would not even pass as 'quasi-universalist'?

And what of those—implicitly recognized by Strange when he claims that no *published* evangelicals have embraced universalism—who have yet done so in their lectures, seminars, sermons, dialogues and correspondence? What of Bengel? What of Alexander Mack and the Brethren? What, come to that, of the Scots Congregationalist theologian P.T. Forsyth (1848-1921), whom increasing numbers of evangelicals are claiming as an ally, but who appears at a single place in the whole canon of his work to flirt with the possibility of a final restitution?⁹⁸ And what of those several present-day evangelical figures who were identified to me in the course of researching this article as known universalists, but who

⁹⁶ Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation*, p. 31.

⁹⁷ Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation*, pp. 31-32.

⁹⁸ P.T. Forsyth, *The Justification of God* (London: Independent Press, 1957 [1916]), p. 161. Elsewhere, however, Forsyth suggests that this possibility must be left unresolved: *The Work of Christ* (London: Collins, 1965), p. 161. For commentary on this matter, compare, C.S. Duthie, 'Ultimate Triumph', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 14 (1961), p. 161; A.M. Hunter, *P.T. Forsyth: Per Crucem ad Lucem* (London: SCM, 1974), pp. 117-24; Ian Howard Marshall, 'Does the New Testament Teach Universal Salvation?', in Colwell (ed.), *Called to One Hope: Perspectives on the Life to Come* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000), p. 24-25, n.14.

have yet to declare it formally? Such questions go to the heart of what it means to be an evangelical—and are likely to become more acute if current radical evangelical models of inclusivism, post-mortem evangelism and semi-restitution move closer to universalist soteriologies, as they may well do in the next generation or so.

And what, finally, of Talbott himself? We noted at the outset that his convinced absolutist universalism, and his personal ambivalence about whether he is termed a 'true evangelical' or not, make him a less than obvious model for current universalising trends within evangelicalism. Having said this, his clear regard for Scripture, his focus on personal salvation, and the fact that he has debated his universalist position substantially with evangelical scholars like John Piper, William Lane Craig and those contributing to the book from which this

present paper is drawn, suggests that the question of whether that position has antecedents *of any sort* among those who have operated as self-conscious, intentional and persistent members of the evangelical community, is a question which it is both valid and useful to address.

In seeking to answer it, we have seen that while universalism is both multi-faceted and particularly hard to discern among evangelicals, some in the past and present evangelical community have clearly been informed and influenced by it. Thus, insofar as Talbott can in any sense still be counted a member of this community, he stands out not because he is the first to have assimilated universalist ideas, but because, as part of a scholarly discourse which is still perceptibly evangelical, he has done so in such an unconditional, unqualified and explicit a way.

NEW FROM REGNUM BOOKS

The Churches and Ethnic Ideology in the Rwandan Crises 1900–1994

Tharcisse Gatwa

Since the early years of the twentieth century Christianity has been a new factor in Rwandan society. This book investigates the role Christian churches played in the formulation and development of the racial ideology that culminated in the 1994 genocide.

Tharcisse Gatwa is Director of Clé Publications, Yaounde, Cameroon.

ISBN 1-870345-24-X / 229 x 152 mm / 306pp / £19.99

Regnum Books, 9 Holdom Avenue, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK1 1QR, UK

Biotheology: Theology, Ethics and the New Biotechnologies

Brian Edgar

KEYWORDS: *Biotheology, bioethics, biotechnology, ethics, gene technology, humanity, creation, species, ecology, imago Dei.*

THE ethical issues dealt with under the heading 'bioethics' should logically parallel the scientific and technological issues which are covered in 'biotechnology'. However, the breadth and diversity of the territory covered by biotechnology (including gene manipulation, nanotechnology, biodiversity, ecology, biopharming [the use of genetically modified crops to produce pharmaceuticals, vaccines, hormones etc], reproductive medicine, stem cell research etc) is rarely matched in the field of bioethics where discussions are usually restricted to a much narrower area relating specifically to the treatment of the human person. This means

that bioethics rarely situates the human person in the broader context which biotechnology presupposes and there is a tendency to overlook the significance of the connectedness of human, animal and plant life. Bioethics as it is usually understood is better referred to as biomedical ethics.

This paper aims to contribute by bringing bioethics into line with biotechnology—which will mean reframing the ethical context; it also aims to encourage the development of the complementary field of biotheology as a theology of life which belongs alongside the more traditional sub-disciplines of systematic theology such as theological anthropology (doctrine of humanity), Christology, pneumatology, ecclesiology etc. An intentional focus on *biotheology* will enhance the understanding of the human person as a part of the full spectrum of life created by God and it will provide greater

Dr Brian Edgar, MTh, PhD, a member of the WEA Theological Commission, is Director of Public Theology for the Australian Evangelical Alliance, and Affiliate Professor, Asbury Theological Seminary, Ky USA. He is a Fellow of ISCAST (The Institute for the Study of Christianity in an Age of Science and Technology Australia), and a member of the Gene Technology Ethics Committee (Commonwealth of Australia). His previous contributions to this journal include the John M. Templeton Foundation award winning article, 'A New Immortality? Reflections on Genetics, Human Aging and the Possibility of Unlimited Lifespan' (1999) 23:4, and 'The Theology of Theological Education' (2005) 29:3. He is also the author of *The Message of the Trinity* (IVP, 2004). The original version of this paper was presented at the Third International Conference on Evangelical Theology, Sunkyul University, Anyang City, Korea Sept 30-Oct 1, 2005.

form and depth to reflections on the diverse and difficult issues which biotechnology generates and with which bioethics needs to deal. After further outlining the situation with regard to *biotechnology* and *bioethics* I will propose six biotheological principles which are designed to give ethical cohesion and theological structure to this new field.

Biotechnology

Some assume that biotechnology began in 1972 when the first recombinant DNA technology experiment was performed. However, although the most recent developments in molecular biology and genetic engineering are critically important, biotechnology has been a part of human history for thousands of years, at least since the ancient Sumerians and Babylonians used yeast to make beer, the Egyptians leavened their bread and the ancient Chinese used fermentation processes to preserve milk and produce cheese and wine. It has continued on through a wide variety of attempts to manipulate breeding processes, preserve foods, achieve artificial reproduction and generally control the processes of life and death and manipulate the forms in which life exists.

As a consequence of this, a sampling of biotechnological issues now includes various medical interventions and their effects on human life and death; reproductive technologies for humans and animals; gene analysis, modification and therapy for plants, animals and humans; nanotechnology and issues relating to the human-machine interface; stem cell research and therapy; some biological mining

and manufacturing techniques such as the leaching of ores and mine site rehabilitation; food and flavouring technologies; various agricultural techniques and crop modifications including improved food storage and nutritional quality, better pest resistance and increased water, temperature and salinity tolerance and biopharming; forestry issues involving faster tree growth, improved fibre, disease resistance and so forth; as well as aquaculture and various forms of animal research. The common points which run throughout are, firstly, the attempt to use biological processes to technological advantage in order to improve the quality of life and, secondly, the perceived connectivity between all forms of life.

This extraordinary array of issues comes about because of the way late twentieth century biotechnology brought together research done in a wide range of areas. This produced a synergy which set the scene for a biological revolution in the twenty-first century which will equal or surpass in significance the computing and information technology revolution of the last century.

One of the main reasons for this development relates to the way biotechnology has begun to unite a field which previously was divided in at least two ways. It was divided 'vertically' according to the *levels* of research which took place and 'horizontally' according to the *areas* which were being investigated. There are at least six levels of research which have come together; these are the sciences which operate at the level of: (1) *molecules* (e.g. molecular biology, especially research on DNA and recombinant

technology); (2) *cells* (e.g. cell biology including work on stem cells, ageing processes and reproductive technology); (3) *organs* (e.g. transplantation and xenotransplantation and the manufacture of replacement tissues); (4) *species* (e.g. the nature and dynamics of the way species function and interact and the influence of genetically modified organisms on them); (5) *humans* (e.g. abortion, euthanasia, the use of medical technologies); and (6) *systems* (e.g. ecology and the influence of biological technologies). The work taking place at these different levels has become much more integrated than previously, and this dynamic inter-relationship has implications for the way previously different areas of research have come together.

While much common thought persists with a strong differentiation between areas of research on say, bacteria, humans, animals and plants, those actually working in these areas now tend to view the situation much more fluidly. At the heart of this has been the ever increasing focus on the role of DNA in life processes. From a scientific point of view the distinction between, for example, 'human genes' and 'animal genes' is arbitrary. There may well be 'genes which humans have' but at the most fundamental level the genes are not perceived as intrinsically human or animal, DNA is simply DNA wherever it is found.

The obvious reality is that gene transfer is now possible in such a way that old distinctions are being called into question. Previously impenetrable barriers are now being crossed and the old taxonomies of species and the distinctions which have previously divided medical technology, animal

and crop research and the study of ecological systems are being called into question. Trans-kingdom gene transfer, biopharmaceuticals, nanotechnology and other such areas of research increase the trend towards a level of integration not generally matched in the ethical or theological fields.

Bioethics

The term 'bioethics' was coined in 1971 by cancer researcher Van Rensselaer Potter in *Bioethics: Bridge to the Future*.¹ Potter had a broad view and used the term to relate to all issues related to life. He did not equate bioethics with human biomedical research. He argued that advances in biotechnology had implications for all life systems and societies and he expounded on this in his subsequent book, *Global Bioethics*, which integrated a scientific view of the world with religious and philosophical systems.

However, Potter's breadth of vision for a form of bioethics which matched the breadth of biotechnology was soon supplanted by a much narrower view dominated by medical researchers and ethicists. In 1976 Thomas Shannon published his influential book *Bioethics*² in which he dealt with abortion, handicaps, euthanasia, the right to die and the treatment of the terminally ill, research on humans and informed consent. In the second edi-

¹ Van Rensselaer Potter, *Bioethics: Bridge to the Future* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1971).

² Thomas Shannon, *Bioethics* (Mahwah: Paulist 1976, 1981).

tion in 1981 he added material on genetics and reproduction. He noted that the study was complicated by the interdisciplinary nature of the problems and by the continuing advances of science, but defined bioethics as 'a set of ethical teachings related specifically to medicine'.

The new field of bioethics continued on in the work of writers such as Gerald Kelly, John Ford, Richard McCormick, Charles Curran, Daniel Maguire, and Daniel Callahan. In 1986 H. Tristram Englehardt Jr., produced *The Foundations of Bioethics*.³ In this standard text, bioethics was essentially about health care for humans, including issues such as the beginning and ending of human life. This was, essentially, 'Bioethics Mark I'.

There have been times when bioethics has come closer to taking on a broader perspective. In 1988 David Suzuki and Peter Knudson wrote *Genethics: the ethics of engineering life*.⁴ This popularised the new term 'genethic' and was influential in helping people think more broadly, but it remained outside the field of 'bioethics'. In 1991, for example, Francisco Javier Elizari Basterra's *Bioethics*⁵ continued to treat 'bioethics' as medical ethics and little more. In 1996 Gilbert Meilander's *Bioethics* (Eerdmans, 1996) still dealt primarily

with issues concerning the beginning and ending of human life (abortion and euthanasia), although some genetics issues did make an appearance, though solely in terms of how it affected humans.

In C. Christopher Hook, John F. Kilner, Diann B. Ustal (eds), *Cutting Edge Bioethics: A Christian Exploration of Technologies and Trends* (Eerdmans Publishing, 2002) there was almost a return to Van Rensselaer Potter's original conception of bioethics. However, it can hardly be said that since then bioethics as a whole reflects the area covered by biotechnology or deals with the issues in the more integrated manner it deserves. It is still dominated by the medical model. 'Bioethics Mark II' needs to be developed to draw its principles from a wider ethical and theological background.

What can be learned from the usual medical approach to bioethics is the effectiveness of having a simple, yet comprehensive set of principles which establish the essential ground to be covered in any discussion of a specific issue. Bioethics Mark I has established a set of four or five principles which provide a basis on which to consider specific issues. These principles, in one form or another, are well known among the medical community⁶ and may be summarised briefly as: (1) *beneficence* (requiring actions which promote the good of the patient); (2) *non-maleficence* (prohibiting action which will cause harm); (3) *patient*

3 H. Tristram Englehardt Jr, *The Foundations of Bioethics* (New York: Oxford University, 1986).

4 David Suzuki and Peter Knudson, *Genethics: the ethics of engineering life* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1989).

5 Francisco Javier Elizari Basterra, *Bioethics* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1994)

6 One well known form of them was articulated by Tom Beauchamp and James Childress in *Principles of Biomedical Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

autonomy (meaning that practitioners should not interfere with the effective exercise of patient autonomy); (4) *justice* (requiring that social benefits and costs be distributed fairly); (5) *confidentiality* (patients are to retain control of information generated in connection with their treatment).

One can debate the value of these principles and the concept of a principled approach in general. It can be argued, for instance, that there is a tension between respecting the freedom of the person and securing their best interests. In fact, there is a tendency for the third principle to trump all the others, which means, amongst other things, that the practitioner is divested of any significant ethical responsibility. Nonetheless, the impact and the value of these principles should not be underestimated. Even though it is not always clear precisely what they imply in a specific situation, they have provided an agenda and set the ground rules for discussion.

What is needed now is a new set of principles which can perform the same function for the new field of Bioethics Mark II that these medical principles have performed for Bioethics Mark I. There is a need for a set of principles which will provide a single, theologically sound⁷ and generally acceptable

foundation for the whole field of gene technology ethics.

Biotheological principles

The present aim is to establish a set of principles which will provide a framework for ethical and theological reflection on all levels of life and being—human, animal, plant and inanimate, both present and future. They are: (1) respecting the intrinsic value of all life; (2) valuing human uniqueness; (3) preserving organisational integrity; (4) recognizing ecological holism; (5) minimising future liability; and (6) producing social benefit.

These principles operate in the same way as the biomedical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence and so forth. That is, they do not automatically provide an answer for all the specific issues that can be raised, but they do provide a framework which controls the form of the discussion and they provide guidelines as to the essential issues that need to be addressed. The following brief outline of the six principles can elaborate only briefly on the rationale for including the various principles and on the kind of issues they can address.

1. Respecting the intrinsic value of all life

The first biotheological principle opposes the idea that life forms have value only as they have value for people. This is a fundamental principle which is in accord with an understanding of the world as 'creation' rather than simply as 'nature'. Value is derived from the fact of divine creation and from God's evaluation of the world

⁷ Interestingly, Christian theologians were very involved in the early development of the field of bioethics in the 1970s, but that contribution has diminished over the years and bioethics has become, in many places, a secular field and the Christian contribution, where it exists, is reduced to an ethical commentary, and often the ethical dimension is reduced to being purely utilitarian in form.

as 'good' (Gen.1:31). This is a principle which needs to be re-affirmed because at various times it has been denied by reductionist science, anthropocentric theology and Cartesian philosophy.

The first of these is an understanding of life in purely physical terms, with respect to DNA, the movement of atoms, molecules and nerves and so forth. It effectively eliminates all human significance and intrinsic value for living things. The second is a theology which operates from a point of view which stresses the human soul to the point where the value of other parts of God's creation is diminished. While it has been suggested that this is what lies behind most of the ecological problems of the present⁸ it seems, without denying all Christian culpability, that it is the third approach which has been more damaging, albeit partly through influencing the Christian approach.

Descartes argued that the human body was simply a machine made out of dead matter. The body operates not so much by what we would understand as biological principles but by purely mechanical principles. According to his mechanical philosophy of matter nothing is inherently alive, neither human bodies nor plants nor animals. The life of the person lies entirely in the immaterial soul which inhabits the body and which controls the body through the pineal gland, a small gland at the centre of the brain. Descartes believed that it moves, twisting and turning, literally pulling strings that

mechanically control the body's movements.

Descartes' mechanistic philosophy has been profoundly influential in the modern era. Its anthropocentrism is such that the natural world is seen as existing to serve, be used and consumed by humanity. This stands in contrast to the biblical view of the value of the whole of creation and the expectation of the redemption of all things. In recent times the anthropocentrism of Cartesian philosophy has been challenged by zoocentric approaches (the view that sentient [vertebrate] animals also have intrinsic value), biocentric attitudes (all living beings have intrinsic value—they have a good of their own) and ecocentric philosophies (where the emphasis is on species and ecosystems having intrinsic value, not only the individual organisms). The truth, and the limitations, of these various approaches can best be integrated in a theocentric approach in which the intrinsic value of all life is related to the life and action of God.

The theological challenge to anthropocentric tendencies can be related to recent shifts in trinitarian theology towards stressing the sociality, the diversity and the immanence of God; this is in contrast to more traditional approaches which tended to stress the unity, the hierarchy and the transcendence of God. There is no fundamental contradiction here, but a shift of emphasis can significantly alter one's understanding of the way value is derived from the life and action of God. Where hierarchy and transcendence are stressed, the work of creation is traditionally associated with the Father, and a hierarchy is created

⁸ Peter Singer blames Christianity for the widespread presence of this kind of anthropocentrism (See *Animal Liberation* (2nd ed.; London: Jonathan Cape, 1990).

within God (with the Father above Christ and the Spirit), and humanity (with male above female) and within the created order (with humanity above animals and animals above plants).

Recent trinitarian thinking has tended to shift the emphasis towards relationship and immanence and in terms of the created order this means a greater recognition of the fact that creation is a wholly trinitarian process. The Father creates through the Son in the power of the Spirit; through the diversity of the Trinity it is possible to re-discover the mystery of the presence of God in the world, the community of human life and an existence of the world in God (see Prov. 8: 22-31; Col. 1:15-20) which stresses the value of the whole of creation and not merely the value of humanity.

This provides the basis for an eco-theology which values all species and forms of life and which supports their care and conservation. However, a theology of creation requires as a corollary a theology of re-creation, the transformation of the world by God. One cannot exist without the other. A Christological understanding of this transformation involves the death of one entity to bring about another. This applies not only spiritually (which includes the physical) but also scientifically as any understanding of life rationally requires an understanding of death.

A theology of death recognizes, amongst other things, that the world is dynamic and changing and that God is a life-giver who leads the world on into new ways of being through death. This is consistent with the fact that at the level of *individual cells* a person's good

health, life and growth depend upon the death of body cells. The unfettered reproduction of cells would lead very quickly to the death of the individual. That is the problem of cancer. Built into our individual lives is a death which allows life. Moreover, at the level of *individual organisms* (plants and animals and persons), there is a cycle of life which through degradation, corruption and composting—call it what you will—means that new life is made possible.

With regard to *species*, there also seems to be a value to extinction. While biodiversity has increased (when one starts with few and simple there is only one way to go) there has always also been an associated loss of species. At times this has almost been catastrophic but this should not necessarily be seen as entirely negative. Large scale fluctuations are vital to the dynamics of large systems and can actually promote the development of new and more robust species. Just as death is essential for individual members of any living community, so too some loss of species may be a natural and healthy aspect of the global community of life.

The theological material underpinning the principle of the intrinsic value of all life thus provides a *prima facie* case for defending all species and believing that the environment is not simply a means to an end. However, it also provides evidence that this is a principle that should not be absolutised and which can legitimately be seen as needing to be understood in relation to other principles. The point is that the individual principles nominated here provide a good basis for reflection but should not be seen as

either absolute or as un-related to the others. Together, however, they do provide a foundation on which to build.

2. Valuing human uniqueness

The principle of the intrinsic value of all life is closely related to the second principle which emphasizes the *unique intrinsic value* attributed to the human person individually and as a species. The rationale for this, and the implications of it, can be explored in a number of ways which illustrate the value of interpreting it in relation to the other five principles.

Firstly, it helps in understanding human life in relation to animal and plant life. While the traditional Christian position on human life as having unique value retains currency, it has also been characterised as 'species-ist'. This is a term coined by Richard Ryder and popularised by Peter Singer and it is 'a prejudice or attitude of bias towards the interests of members of one's own species and against those of members of other species'.⁹ This view seeks a Copernican revolution in ethics, displacing the human person from the centre of concern. It is argued, on the one hand, that there is no objective criteria for treating humans differently from animals, while on the other hand it claims that sentience is an appropriate measure of value and therefore that certain intelligent animals should be valued more than certain humans (neonates or those seriously intellectually disabled).

A biotheological response to this will deal with traditional anthropological themes, such as the concept of the *imago Dei* and the notion of the soul, but will do so in relation to other theological principles relevant to valuing other forms of life. There are exegetical problems related to the *imago Dei* which present difficulties when using this as a defence of human value in the public arena. There are very few scriptural references to it, and the concept itself, *imago Dei*, is not clearly defined (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1-3; 9: 5-6; 1 Cor.11:7; James 3:9).

The paucity of passages does not reflect its traditional theological significance and whatever it means in any more precise sense it does at least mean fairly clearly that there is some sense in which humanity is like God, and that is a profound point to bear in mind. We are persons, not just animals and not just robots; people able to enter into a personal relationship with God in a way that rocks, plants and animals cannot. The *imago Dei* does provide a basis for resisting accusations of species-ism, but questions remain concerning the nature of the traditional Christian relationship of the relative value and integrity of the human person to that of plant and animal life.

Christian theology has generally operated with a radical differentiation of value between humanity and the rest of the created order; there is often a *de facto* hierarchical understanding of the value of the rest of life which appears to derive from this initial distinction and which values dolphins more than bacteria and whales more than mice. What are the criteria used to justify this? This is rapidly becoming a significant issue in the face of both the

⁹ Cited in Richard Sylvan and David Bennett, *The Greening of Ethics* (Cambridge: White Horse Press, 1994).

potential loss of many species from our world, and the presence of alternative philosophies of life.

The history of the world suggests that there is an inherent movement from simple to more complex forms of life. Does this suggest that there is a hierarchy of value related to the complexity and richness of an organism's experience? Does this place humans at the top with amoeba at the bottom, and other animals located variously between with whales, dolphins and great apes closer to the top? The reality of the complexity and richness of experience in evidence in some animals (including relationships, consciousness, language, the use of tools, feelings and affection) needs to be related to both of the principles discussed so far—the intrinsic value of all things and the unique value attributed to persons—in order to be able to adequately present a Christian view on specific issues relating to animals and the environment.

The second area that the principle of human uniqueness can address relates to the acceptable parameters for future human life. The re-creation of the self has started: changing the form of our bodies through surgery, chemicals, hormone-producing implants, prosthetic limbs, organ transplants, xenotransplantation, artificial hearts, pacemakers, bionic ears and, soon perhaps, the replacement of damaged optic nerves in blind people with electronic technology to restore vision. Gene therapy and neurological medication can treat mental disorders and alter sexual orientation—changes which affect not only the body but also personality. What further changes will developments in the rapidly changing

field of neurochemistry bring about?

Moreover, the process of merging the mechanical with the biological has begun as machines are now implanted into people and made acceptable to bodies through the use of various drugs which suppress the immune system's rejection of them. There are trans-humanists who are looking towards a shift in human nature, moving perhaps towards a post-human condition, as well as bioconservatives who see trans-human initiatives as nothing other than de-humanising tendencies.

What are the implications of trying to modify personality characteristics so that people are more or less loving, kind, generous, peaceful, angry, evil, selfish or depressed? Not everything that has been suggested as being possible will actually materialize, but obviously significant physical changes are going to be possible, and significant aspects of personality will be affected. To attempt to eliminate from the human character attitudes such as 'hate' or 'anger' which cause fighting, strife and war is to attempt the impossible. Such attitudes are 'context specific'—that is, hate and anger can be good and proper attitudes in certain circumstances. We may be angry precisely because we love God or justice or our neighbour who is suffering. To eliminate anger is to eliminate love. Any genetic process which eliminates anger has effectively 'killed' the person—even if there is still a body. It is possible that technology will find new ways of killing people—there is nothing new in that! But I don't believe that the extreme forms of modification that some people look for, or fear, will eventuate. Yet this is not to say that there will not be areas of new discovery and

for some time, areas of controversy.

Responses to these two issues concerning the relationship of human life to animal and plant life, and the limits of future human nature, will be influenced by the way in which the concept of the *imago Dei* is developed. Traditionally, there have been two broad categories of interpretation.

The first sees the image as *substantial*: this view holds that the *imago Dei* is imprinted on the person as an image is impressed on a coin. The image is thus of some characteristic imprinted on the human person which is intrinsic to who we are. The only issue to be resolved is precisely what that is, whether it is our personality, creativity, rationality, spirituality or something else. The second sees the image as *functional*: this view holds that the *imago Dei* is found in the exercise of 'dominion' and 'stewardship' of the rest of creation (Gen. 1:28). It can be considered to be a sub-set of the first view if this particular responsibility is seen more as a consequence of being made in the image of God than being the image itself.

Both these approaches are strongly related to a theology of *creation* (this is the way that God has made humanity and, by implication, it ought not to be changed by humanity) and it is therefore generally taken as a *limitation* on any sort of attempt to modify human nature. Cloning, human transgenics, cybernetics and so forth are therefore generally reckoned to be inappropriate.

In more recent years a different strand of interpretation has become much more prominent. It views the image as being more *dynamic* (more like an image in a mirror which can

change and be sharper or less clear depending on the conditions) *relational* (based on the reference in Gen. 1:26 to being made as essentially relational beings—male and female) and *teleological* (the image is seen as a future possibility or a goal, something which is to be formed by Christ in us, as in Rom. 8:29).

The more relational and dynamic view of the image is not grounded so much in a theology of *creation* as it is in a theology of *redemption*. It suggests that the reason that there is a difficulty in determining which human characteristic is *the* defining aspect of the image of God in us is precisely because it is not something to be defined in terms of any one aspect of us. The image is not a past tense but a future element and it is formed in us in our being human in being all that we are. There is not one specific characteristic which makes us human; instead, God is found in us in the whole of life. It is a destiny, a direction, a destination rather than a statement about our origin.

Of course, it is quite possible to see that the two elements, the *substantial and creational* on the one hand and the *dynamic and eschatological* on the other are not necessarily to be opposed or seen as alternates. They can be synthesised. Yet, in terms of working through the implications of the principles outlined here, it is clear that an emphasis on the latter may well encourage some to see a justification for enhancing, developing and changing human nature in a way that the more conservative, creational theology would typically not allow. Once again, the principles do not simply provide an immediate answer to every situation,

but they do provide a way which might lead to discussion of the issues in an appropriate context which ensures that a comprehensive biotheology can develop.

3. Preserving organismal integrity

This principle of preserving organismal integrity begins by repudiating reductionist notions which deny the significance of those higher levels of life and consciousness which occur when certain levels of complexity of life are achieved. Positively, the principle affirms the notion that greater value resides in individual organisms understood as a whole. It is a case of the whole being more than the sum of its parts. This means that a description of people, plants and animals solely in terms of genetic and biological structures is inadequate. All life forms need to be understood in terms of the organism's level of ability to exist, act and, potentially, to be aware.

Once again, the practical ramifications of this principle have to be worked out both in relation to specific issues and in relation to the other principles. Mention has already been made of the possibilities inherent in gene technology and this is an issue that is going to become even more significant in the twenty-first century. Some of the more common reasons for producing genetically modified animals are: to research genes in order to understand more about their function and regulation; to provide animals which can model the effects of new medical and genetic treatments; to provide organs and tissues for human transplant surgery; to produce milk or other prod-

ucts which contain therapeutic proteins or greater nutritional value; and to improve livestock quality. But, of course, one could be much more speculative and imagine all kinds of genetic modifications of a less serious but more popular nature relating to the modification of pets.

Do some things have a right not to be genetically engineered? Is it appropriate to produce a genetically modified blue rose? One could argue for this on the basis of aesthetics (it will look lovely) or utility (it will do good) and this will often involve an anthropocentric perspective (is it good for people?). On the other hand one could consider the intrinsic nature of the rose: is this good for the roses? If it is satisfactorily argued that the introduction of a blue gene does not destroy the integrity of the rose, the question remains as to what change would damage it, and how we would know when that occurred. And if genes from a rose were crossed with genes from a mouse would there be a greater level of concern for the integrity of the mouse?

Qualitative research on attitudes to gene technology shows that public concerns not only involve the usual matters of the physical and health risks related to a new technology, but also extend to a deeper, more existential level of concern about the meaning of human nature and the contravention of fundamental order in the natural world.¹⁰ It has been suggested that peo-

¹⁰ There should be no surprise at this, especially not from scientists who, themselves are very concerned with finding order in the natural world.

ple have a sense of given order which is radically challenged by the possibilities inherent in gene technology and, especially, the novelty of trans-species gene transfer.¹¹ This existential concern was expressed in the title of a government report, 'Fish don't lay tomatoes, do they?'¹²

The area that probably causes the greatest concern is the animal-human boundary. Historically, anxiety about maintaining the animal-human boundary was a major source of opposition to Darwin's theory of evolution and the same anxiety was evident in the debate over cowpox vaccination. Yet species boundaries are not necessarily unchallengeable. The definitions of species are often arbitrary. But the breeding boundary is a real (though not absolute) one. Some would argue that evolutionary development means that one 'may understand species as provisional and fluid collections of individuals, each species playing its part in a developing process, initiated by God of

which we ourselves are a fairly recent product'.¹³

What is certain is that we are approaching a radically new point in history at which we possess a new power, often referred to as the power of co-creation. Human decisions are now a critical factor in the continuing functioning of the planet's systems and in preserving and extending (or diminishing) the integrity of God's creation.

This principle argues against the unfettered modification of organisms and species. The integrity of organisms as entities must be respected. However, it would be premature to conclude that the value of organismal integrity absolutely rules out genetic modification. It does introduce a critically important attitude of care and respect for all life forms, but none of the principles outlined here should be absolutised.

This biotheological principle needs to be correlated with the values inherent in the other five. Just as the first two principles are particularly related (the value of the human person can be understood only in the context of the intrinsic value of all living things) so too this principle which defends the integrity of individual organisms has to be interpreted in close relation to the fourth principle which affirms an overall cohesion to life as a whole, a principle which, as will be shown, places the life of the individual organism in a broader context.

11 It has also been suggested that despite this there is also a feeling that in certain circumstances some modifications may be justified—provided that the purposes are the right ones. But also that there is a fair degree of cynicism and fatalism that such conditions are unlikely to be met and that more dramatic and less justifiable changes will occur. See Celia Deane-Drummond et al, "Genetically Modified Theology: The Religious Dimensions of Public Concern about Agricultural Biotechnology", in *Studies in Christian Ethics* (Vol. 14, No 2), pages 23-41.

12 Commonwealth of Australia, 'A Cautionary tale: Fish don't lay tomatoes, do they?' *A report on the Gene Technology Bill 2000* (November 2000).

13 Biotechnology and Biological Research Council, *Ethics, Morality and Animal Biotechnology*, (2000), 13.

4. Recognizing ecological holism

The fourth principle recognizes the connectedness of all life and opposes those approaches which unjustifiably isolate or preference certain parts of the created order. The most common tendency in this regard is to attribute greater value to those parts of the natural world which have attraction to people, and to attribute lesser value to those parts of the world which appear to have little relationship or attraction to people. The principle of recognizing ecological holism works against such anthropocentrically dominated views.

Taking an ecologically holistic perspective means recognizing that life is best understood as a whole, and that the various life forms are intimately related and mutually dependent upon each other. Life is organised in a series of nested systems in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, not least because of the significance of the interactions between the parts. Life can properly be understood only from a perspective which embraces the whole.

At the physical level, one of the unifying principles for life is DNA. As time goes by, more and more bioethics revolves around DNA and the concept of the gene. DNA links animal, vegetable and human life. Presently there is a trend towards relating organisms according to the levels of DNA similarity. For example there is a 99.4% similarity of DNA between gorillas and humans, 82.9% for cattle and humans, 54.2% for frogs and humans, 14.4% lampreys (jawless fish) and humans, 13.1% sea slug and humans and 15.1%

for soybean and humans.¹⁴ Clearly, the boundaries between species are going to be blurred if distinctions are made purely on the basis of a single percentage. In fact, the actual level of similarity in DNA is not a good indicator of differences between species as there can be a large difference in phenotypic expression (that is, the outward, physical manifestation of the entity) even when there is a strong DNA similarity.

The general point remains, however, that life is united and the power of DNA, which is only just being explored, has made it into an icon for life itself. In popular culture DNA functions as a secular equivalent of the soul—as an independent, apparently immortal, self-replicating dimension of the person which is fundamental to identity, differentiation and character. DNA profoundly affects our life, the age at which we die and the health we have; it determines our sexuality and affects the way it is expressed. Our genes have a continual influence on our personality and perhaps even our religiosity. To some extent DNA is destiny. There should be no surprise that in some places DNA seem to be the locus of the true self.¹⁵

From a theological point of view

¹⁴ Figures based on overlap in DNA for beta chain of haemoglobin that consists of a 146 amino acid residue. The actual figures for total overlap of genomes will differ from overlap in DNA that codes for beta chain; they may be higher or lower. <http://users.rcn.com/jkimball.ma.ultranet/BiologyPages/T/Taxonomy.html>.

¹⁵ Dorothy Nelkin & M. Susan Lindee, *The DNA Mystique: the gene as cultural icon* (New York: Freeman and Co., 1995).

everything is indeed connected and has to be seen and understood holistically, not primarily because of DNA but because God is All in all and everything is connected to him (Col. 1:15-17). The principle of totality operates here: the part exists for the whole and therefore the good of the part exists for the good of the whole. And all things hold together because they are 'in Christ'. The principle of holism encourages the exploration of the relationship of theological connectedness and physical relationships in the natural world.

5. Minimising future liability

The fifth principle takes a move away from the kind of values expressed in the first four principles in which there is an attempt to appropriately relate together the significance of the breadth of life in all its dimensions. These first four principles which operate, so to speak, 'horizontally' need to be related to a principle which connects life 'vertically'—a connectedness of life through time. The world of today emerges out of the past and is the basis of the future.

This principle speaks to us of the responsibilities we have for the future. This is a principle which expresses both caution and hope. It is formed in terms of 'minimising future liability' rather than 'maximising future potential'. It could be argued that the latter is a more appropriate way of ensuring benefit for future generations, but maximising any kind of return also increases the risk factor and the speed of development today is such that a more conservative, precautionary attitude is to be preferred.

This is consistent with an approach

which has developed in international environmental law known as 'the precautionary principle'. It is based on the concept of taking anticipatory action to prevent possible harm in situations where there is some scientific uncertainty about the outcomes. It is a principle which emerged in German law in the 1970s (as a result of pollution that was crossing national boundaries). Since the 1980s various forms have been introduced in multilateral and international declarations and protocols. It is a principle which can be applied in a wide range of situations, from oil exploration to genetic modifications.

The exact form of the principle is debatable, but the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development defines it in this way, 'Where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.' There is debate about the extent to which it should be applied in international law (with Europe generally being more favourable to it than the USA) and about what 'certainty' involves and about the degree of precaution involved, but many countries have used it in specific pieces of legislation related to the environment. The Australian Government has incorporated it in twenty-seven different pieces of legislation.

The precautionary principle has application in many areas relating to the environment. It has obvious relevance to any consideration of gene technology. The possibility of unintended consequences has to be considered when dealing with, for instance,

genetically modified crops. The possibility of accidental gene flow with impact on other species and the possibility of unintended and ecologically damaging traits has to be recognized. A conservative approach to this technology is preferable. Recalling a defective vehicle is possible but recalling a problem gene is not.

An awareness of (a) God's appreciation of his creation; (b) his concern for all generations; and (c) his desire to lead his people into the future means that it is theologically appropriate to have an ethic driven largely by respect for future generations. 'Let us think of the world's children when we reflect on and evaluate our options for action.'¹⁶ This is an important principle which ought to be a part of all biotheological discussions.

6. Producing social benefit

The final principle insists that the ultimate purposes of biotechnological developments are of crucial importance. This principle resists biotechnological development for trivial purposes or for economic gain at the cost of social benefit. The difficulties inherent in this principle, and the more general problem of operating with such a set of principles, can be illustrated by reference to the biomedical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, patient autonomy and justice referred to earlier.

The principle which requires doc-

tors to 'do good' is actually overwhelmed in practice by the principle of patient autonomy. The practitioner is under great pressure to accede to patient wishes in every situation, and not to do so seems to be 'unethical' as it would conflict with the principle of autonomy. Even if a doctor considers that a particular course of action is not good or helpful they usually feel an obligation to employ it if the patient wishes it. As a consequence, medical practitioners easily become non-ethical dispensers of medical services in which all the principles relating to 'good', 'bad' and 'justice' are interpreted by reference to what the individual patient determines them to be.

The same danger potentially exists with the more corporately framed biotheological principles. 'Social benefit' could become simply anything which a simple majority of the community wants. The fundamental problem in both situations emerges when one principle is allowed to trump the rest. It is important, therefore, that the biotheological principles outlined here should be seen as operating in a more dynamic, egalitarian and interactive manner.

The difficulties involved in the process of assessing social benefit may be illustrated by an unusual situation with regard to the regulation of gene manipulation in Australia. All dealings with genetic material have to be licensed by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator. The Regulator has to follow a prescribed process of determination with regard to whether an action is permissible. As a result of public discussion at the setting up of the governing act of parliament the Regulator is now *not permitted* to take

¹⁶ Common Declaration on Environmental Ethics—Common declaration of John Paul II and the Ecumenical Patriarch His Holiness Bartholomew I, June, 2002.

'social benefit' into account when making a determination—precisely because of concerns for the community. This somewhat paradoxical approach means that, in theory, any genetic modification, no matter how socially trivial or ridiculous or horrifying can be approved as long as it fits the general guidelines and can be shown to be safe.

The reason for this is that while those who established the Act were concerned that there could be a trivialisation of a serious process, they were more worried that if 'social benefit' was included as a justification for undertaking a particular process that it could end up trumping all other considerations. It was argued that if the perceived benefit was small there would be a conservative attitude towards approvals. But if the perceived benefit was considered to be very large—perhaps a cure for cancer—that there would be a temptation for the Regulators to take more of a risk with a gene modification proposal than they would have done if the assumed benefit was less significant. Indeed, if 'social benefit' was built into the regulations as a factor to be considered they would perhaps be *required* to consider taking a greater level of risk. So the decision was that it was in the community interest to omit reference to community interest!

Given the utilitarian atmosphere of most public debate one can see the logic of this. However, it is hard to see that in the long term, community benefit will be enhanced if there is no discussion of what it actually involves. The real problem that needs to be addressed is that public ethical debate is typically so focused on utilitarian

methodology that other ethical approaches and values are rarely taken into account. The use of the six principles nominated here would provide a way for social benefit to be related to other factors, including an understanding of intrinsic value which is not grounded in utility. The principle of social benefit needs to take into the account the breadth covered by the various principles. It also needs to avoid being constrained by national boundaries and to deal with need wherever it exists.

Conclusion and Continuation

Biotheology is a valid and necessary field of theological endeavour and these six principles have the potential to provide ethical cohesion and theological structure to discussions on biotechnology and bioethics. They will not, by themselves, automatically resolve ethical dilemmas but they do serve to establish the essential parameters and principles which ought to frame the discussion. Further work needs to take place in two ways. Firstly, in terms of the application of these principles to specific issues and, secondly, in terms of fundamental theological issues which these principles raise. It is possible at this point only to briefly outline what I perceive to be the three most critical theological issues which have emerged in this discussion.

The first concerns developing an understanding of *the nature of God's action in the world*. This is a question that is often expressed negatively in terms of the conviction that humanity should not be 'playing God' with gene technology or euthanasia or genetically modified crops. It is possible to

identify initially three categories of response to this.

One view interprets humanity as *creatures* responsible to live according to God's wishes and plans and with little or no right to intervene and 'play God' by changing aspects of life and nature. Another view argues that people have now become *co-creators with God*.¹⁷ That is, God has intentionally brought into being a creature who represents a new stage of freedom and who acts as co-creator to participate in the intentional fulfilment of God's purposes. This is a view in which humanity is a very active participant in changing the world and it believes that humanity is, in fact, required to 'play God' in the sense of playing a God-given role in the management of this world (Gen.1:28). This is a claim that is deservedly being given considerable attention, but if the first view says too little about human responsibility this one has the potential to say too much. To be designated 'co-creator' with God is to forget the power and the danger inherent in sin.

A third approach suggests that it is preferable to use a more traditional term in a slightly modified way. That is, we are *pro-creators* before God. In the usual sense 'to procreate' means to bear children, and in that sense humanity has always had, under God, the power to create life. Just as it has always had the power to kill and so end life. 'Pro-creators' are those who, like a 'pro-consul', stand in the place of another, yet under their authority. The

possibilities inherent in the new biotechnologies do not fundamentally alter the principle that humans are to act responsibly as pro-creators, but it does seriously extend the sphere of human influence and the specific possibilities. This is an understanding of the human role which is perhaps less definitive than either of the previous alternatives. It recognizes both divine and human responsibility and deserves further consideration.

The second area for work concerns *the meaning of being human* in the light of technologies which can modify human nature or mix human, animal and plant characteristics. It is now of great importance that the person not be interpreted purely from the point of view of a western individualism where the person is defined in terms of an independent, autonomous, self-actuating, self-fulfilling entity.

What it means to be human must be considered from the individual level, the social level and the species level. Bioethics has focused on the first of these with some forays into the second, but the second and third are going to increase in importance in the light of biotechnological developments. Questions about the boundaries of individual life (at the beginning of life with regard to embryos and at the end of life with regard to euthanasia) will soon be joined by serious questions about the boundaries of humanity in social relationship to other persons (to what extent can we artificially share genes, modify personality and relationships and select aspects of human form and nature?) and species (what are the limits of gene transfer and what are the limits of being human?).

The third critical biotheological

17 P. Hefner, *The Human Factor: Evolution, Culture and Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993).

issue relates to the way that we understand the value and the order of the natural world. Any new technology produces a degree of public uncertainty about the value of change and the levels of risk. However, certain areas of biotechnology appear to create higher levels of existential angst and this occurs when it seems that significant aspects of the order of the world are being challenged. Of particular concern is the human-other organism boundary. As previously noted, when that previously impenetrable boundary is challenged serious questions emerge, and the more a technology contravenes the perceived order the more it is resisted.

Cultural issues are undoubtedly tied

up with this. Scientists operating at the molecular level see high levels of similarity in DNA between apparently different species to the extent that some argue that the concept of species is no longer appropriate and that proscribing the crossing of species borders on the grounds that it is unnatural seems scientifically indefensible. More theological discussion needs to take place regarding the significance of perceived order and boundaries within the world.

This brief exploration reveals the extent of the territory to be covered in biotheology. Unless the many and varied dimensions of this field of study are integrated it will forever be disadvantaged. It is hoped that the six principles nominated here will provide a guide for future travellers.

How is this publication thinking about the future? By becoming part of the past.

This publication is available from ProQuest Information and Learning in one or more of the following ways:

- Online, via the ProQuest information service
- Microfilm
- CD-ROM
- Via database licensing

For more information, call

1-800-521-0600, EXT. 2888 (US) OR 01-734-761-4700 (INTERNATIONAL)

WWW.IL.PROQUEST.COM

Glossolalia in Korean Christianity: An Historical Survey

Dr. Bonjour Bay

KEYWORDS: *Pneumatology, Holy Spirit, glossolalia, Pentecostal movement, Spirit baptism, mysticism, physical phenomena, Holiness movements, cessationism*

1. Introduction

THE matter of glossolalia (speaking in other tongues) has been a hot issue in Korean pneumatological controversies since 1960.¹ Nowadays there are many people who speak in other tongues in many denominations, and this phenomenon is very popular world-wide. In most parts of Africa and of South America, people no longer regard the

glossolalia or miraculous healing as extraordinary experiences. It is very evident that the matter of glossolalia is one of the important issues of contemporary churches theologically and phenomenologically.

Speaking in other tongues has greatly influenced not only the traditional Pentecostal denominations but also the Reformed churches and Wesleyan-Holiness groups. In fact, Reformed and Wesleyan-Holiness theological traditions have dealt with the matter negatively for a long time, resulting in serious disharmony between pastoral and theological fields.

On the other hand, classical Pentecostalism has always focused on the glossolalia as the initial sign of Spirit baptism. However, in spite of the growing tendency to practise glossolalia, most of the churches now seem to regard it as one of the spiritual gifts rather than the sign of the Spirit baptism. This raises questions about the

¹ For more about the conflicts in the Reformed area which have been the core of Korean pneumatological controversies, refer to Bonjour Bay, *HanGukGyoHoiWa SungLyungSeLei (Korean Church and the Spirit Baptism)* (Anyang: Sungkyul University Press, 2004), pp. 75-140.

Dr. Bonjour Bay is Professor of Church History and Chief Chaplain at SungKyul University, AnYang City, Korea. A researcher in spiritual movements, he holds a PhD from Seoul Theological University, and has published many articles on spirituality, renewal and pneumatology, including *SungLyungSeLei (Korean Church and the Spirit Baptism)* (Sungkyul University Press, 2004) and *GaiSinGyo SungLyungLonWi YergSa (A History of Protestant Pneumatology)* (SungKyul University Press, 2003). This paper was presented at the Third International Conference on Evangelical Theology, Sunkyul University, Anyang City, Korea Sept 30-Oct1, 2005.

way the pastoral and theological perspectives can be reconciled.

This paper will present points for the answer to these issues rather than give a definitive solution. It will present and evaluate historically the matter of glossolalia in the Korean context. Now, I believe, is the time for pursuing the theological answer that will harmonize the matter within a pastoral context among Reformed, Wesleyan and Pentecostal heritages.

2. The Late Nineteenth Century: Trends in America before glossolalia was introduced into the Korean Church

Spiritual movements that stressed glossolalia were derived from Wesleyan-Holiness and Reformed movements in late nineteenth century America. The earlier was the Wesleyan-Holiness Movement. To search for the origin of that movement, there first needs to be an understanding of 'the Third Blessing'. The Third Blessing was a radical thought which was mainly brought in from the Wesleyan-Holiness group.² There seemed to be some peo-

ple in the Wesleyan Holiness group who already confessed that they were 'wholly sanctified' yet this experience did not seem to produce a dynamic working of God in their lives, and any accompanying 'power for service'. Moreover, many among the Holiness camp had experiences in which they claimed to have received special power for service subsequent to entire sanctification. As a result, the position was advanced that the second blessing was entire sanctification. This was to be followed by a subsequent third blessing which was the baptism of the Holy Spirit.³

The most radical of the Wesleyan-Holiness movements was the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, which had its beginning in 1895, and the founder of which was Benjamin Hardin Irwin. Being a studious young man, he began to examine the Scriptures and the writings of John Wesley and those of his colleague, John Fletcher. Irwin was most influenced by the writings of Fletcher, who seemed to teach an experience following sanctification, sometimes called a 'baptism of burning love' although more often the terminology 'baptism with the Holy Ghost and Fire' was used. Fletcher also taught that one could receive several baptisms, if such were needed. In other passages he spoke of those who were 'baptized with fire' and thereby 'endued with power from on high'.⁴ These and other state-

2 Representative writings on this subject were Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981), and also Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997). The Korean translation of the latter book was YoungHun Lee and MyungSoo Park (tr.), *SeGe i SungGyulUnDongEi YergSa* (Seoul: Seoul MalSSumSa, 2000).

3 Richard Gilbertson, *The Baptism of the Holy Spirit* (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Christian Publications, 1993), p. 149.

4 Joseph Benson, *The Life of the Rev. John W. De La Flechere* (London: John Mason, 1838), p. 146. quote from Wood, *Wesleyan Theological*

ments led Irwin to conclude that there was a third experience beyond sanctification called 'the baptism with the Holy Ghost and Fire' or simply 'the fire'.⁵

The main wing of the holiness movement denounced the doctrine as 'the third blessing heresy' and forbade its being preached in their churches. Despite this opposition, the 'Fire-Baptized' movement continued to grow, especially in the rural areas of the Middle West and South.⁶ Irwin organised the Fire-Baptized Holiness Associations in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas.

In 1899, the first issue of *Live Coals of Fire* appeared. With Irwin as editor, and a Canadian, A. E. Robinson, as printing assistant, the paper was distributed throughout the United States. It was the first publication in the nation that taught that the baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire was subsequent to sanctification. Although the Fire-Baptized movement did not teach that the glossolalia was the initial evidence of receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit, those phenomena were quite common among those who received 'the fire'. W. E. Fullers, a Negro minister, wrote to the *Live Coals of Fire* about

'the blood that cleans up, the Holy Ghost that fills up, the fire that burns up, and the dynamite that blows up'. In addition to this, he maintained that man might see the physical manifestation when the Holy Spirit was outpoured.⁷ The Fire-Baptized Holiness Church served as an important link in the chain that later produced the modern Pentecostal movement.

Charles F. Parham, a supply pastor in the Methodist Episcopal Church, was well acquainted with the teaching of entire sanctification as the Second Blessing. In the 1890s, he began to receive the more radical teaching of the holiness movement, 'faith healing as a part of the atonement' and 'baptism with Holy Ghost and fire', as the Third Blessing. It was Parham who first singled out 'glossolalia' as the only evidence of one's having received the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and who taught that it should be a part of normal Christian worship rather than a curious by-product of religious enthusiasm.⁸ It was his teaching that laid the doctrinal and experimental foundations of the modern Pentecostal movement. His influence brought worldwide expansion of Pentecostal faith which directly connected the glossolalia with Spirit Baptism.

Journal (Spring, 1999), 25-6; refer to Laurence W. Wood, 'Pentecostal Sanctification in Wesley and Early Methodism', *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (Spring, 1999), Vol.34. No.1, pp. 31-9.

5 J. H. King, 'History of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church', *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* (March 24, 1921), p. 4.

6 Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1981), p. 63.

3. Before and after 1930s: Lack of Understanding of Glossolalia

There are hardly any references to

7 Gilbertson, *Baptism of the Holy Spirit*, p. 150.

8 Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States*, p. 99.

glossolalia in the Korean church from her establishment in the 1880s to 1900. Furthermore, little description of glossolalia can be found in the observations of some of the missionaries who led the Korean revival after 1903. However most of them seemed to shy away from direct expression of glossolalia because Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries stood in a doctrinal tradition in which there was no room for the gift of glossolalia.

There was a rapidly growing interest in pneumatology since 1903 because of the influence of the revival movement in places like GaiSung and WonSan. So pneumatology was a very important subject for all the revival meetings of Presbyterian churches in PyungYang, and the PyungYang Presbyterian Seminary considered pneumatology as a necessary subject in the curriculum. While there was no appropriate pneumatology textbook that was suitable for the seminarians, *Pneumatology* [SungLyungLon] written by OkMyung Ga, the Chinese professor (together with his other systematic writings), had been read by the PyungYang Presbyterian seminarians since before the 1930s. Therefore it is clear that this book has important significance in understanding the pneumatological history of the Korean church. In this book, OkMyung Ga said that the sign of Spirit baptism was not only glossolalia but also spiritual virtue, spiritual ability, spiritual power and spiritual fruit.⁹ While Professor Ga

did not strongly deny glossolalia,¹⁰ it was evident that he placed great emphasis on the 'power for service' as well as the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

The tendency to link Spirit baptism directly with glossolalia first occurred in the 'glossolalia sect' before and after 1930. The 'Glossolalia sect' was a group of people who highlighted glossolalia, and who were affected by American and English Pentecostal missionaries arriving in Korea from 1928 to 1931. However, their activities were strongly rejected by the mainline denominations in Korea such as Presbyterian, Methodist and SungKyu (Holiness). Meanwhile, the contemporary syncretistic revivalists such as GukJoo Hwang, MyungHwa Ryu and NamJoo Baik¹¹ expanded the religious pluralistic spiritual movement by introducing false revelations, tongue speaking and prophecy from other oriental religious systems.¹²

10 OkMyung Ga's following sentences denoted that seeking the sign of Spirit Baptism, he stressed the more accurate sign transcending glossolalia rather than denied it totally; 'the sign is not only the glossolalia' (p. 103), 'how can we say that only glossolalia is the sign?' (104), 'how can we insist that only glossolalia is the sign?' (p. 104), 'Spirit Baptism cannot be signed only by glossolalia' (p. 104)

11 For more study about these persons, refer to Bonjour Bay, 'A Historical Insight for the Radical Pneumatologies in Korea', *Sung-GyungGoa SinHag (Bible and Theology)*, Vol. 20 (1996), pp. 436-7.

12 For instance, refer to the writings of O. E. Goddard who was the secretary of foreign mission of Southern Methodist and of MyungJik Lee the SungKyu Reverend; O. E. Goddard, 'Receive the Fulness of Holy Spirit', *SinHak-SeGe (Theology World)* 13-2 (1928), 51-2;

9 OkMyung Ga, *SungLyungLon (Pneumatology)*, JaeMyun Jeong (tr.), W. D. Reynolds (sup.) (PyungYang: Presbyterian Seminary, 1931), p. 104.

4. After the 1960s: Glossolalia as the Main Issue of Pneumatology

The Assemblies of God,¹³ the most representative Pentecostal denomination, had a general meeting for organising the Korean work with Arthur B. Chestnut, the missionary of Assemblies of God US, in the chair. This meeting decided that the Articles of the Assemblies of God in Korea would follow the Articles of the American parent body. Since the 1960s, the Assemblies of God in Korea has grown rapidly due to the influence of the Rev. Yonggi Cho; his Yoido Full Gospel Church has become the biggest local church in the world. The Assemblies of God in Korea identifies the emphasis on glossolalia as one of the fundamental features of Pentecostalism, in accordance with the tradition of Assemblies of God in the United States.¹⁴

Rev. Yonggi Cho, as a leading Korean Pentecostal who maintains the classical position on Spirit Baptism, teaches that Spirit baptism is a totally different experience from regeneration. He believes both experiences may happen simultaneously, or each expe-

rience can occur at a different stage from the other.¹⁵ He also emphasizes that when a man receives the Holy Spirit, he must receive it as an authentic experience. If a person is not certain whether he has received the Holy Spirit or not, he should fight a ceaseless mental warfare to reach certainty. Then he would become a bold gospel witness. Cho says that when someone wants to lead another person to receive this experience, certainty that the experience is authentic can be reached only when there is a physical manifestation, that is, 'thing[s] you now hear and see'.¹⁶ The question now arises as to what is the evidence that a person has received the Holy Spirit? It is at this point that Cho introduced glossolalia as the typical outward sign.¹⁷

Three broad streams of pneumatologies appeared in this period. The first was the Pentecostal movement, the second was the Presbyterian spiritual movement, and the third was the Holiness spiritual movement. While the Pentecostal movement was the most characteristic, the other two pneumatologies appeared in the Korean context as a reaction against the Pentecostal movement.

The main characteristic of the Pentecostal pneumatology was the manifestation of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7) such as glossolalia, prophecy,

MyungJik Lee, 'Speak in Other Tongue When We Receive Holy Spirit?', *HwalChon* No. 97 (1930.12), 2; MyungJik Lee, 'How Can We Experience Sanctification?', *HwalChon* No. 148 (1935.3), 8.

13 The denomination established by William H. Durham with his supporters at Hot Springs, Arkansas in 1914.

14 Full Gospel Education Institute (ed.), *HaNaNimWi SungHoi GyoHoiSa (History of the Assemblies of God)* (Seoul: Seoul Books, 1987), pp. 148-9.

15 Yonggi Cho, *SungLyungLon (Pneumatology)* (Seoul: YoungSan Pub., 1971), p. 139.

16 Yonggi Cho, *OJungBogUmGwa SamBagJa ChukBog (Five-fold Gospel and Three-beat Blessing)* (Seoul: Seoul Books, 1994), p. 154.

17 Yonggi Cho, *OJungBogUmGwa SamBagJa ChukBog*, pp. 117-8.

and miracle etc., and their use as tools for evangelism and church growth. Confronting them, Presbyterianism focused on the inward fruit of Holy Spirit. The Holiness group stressed the believer's repentance and instantaneous sanctification which were enforced from the time of the primitive Korean church.

Following the rapid growth of the Yoido Full Gospel Church, which might be attributed particularly to the experience of glossolalia and the practice of the healing ministry, there was growing criticism of Pentecostalism in Korean theological circles. It was especially said that the spiritual influence coming from this church tended to mass produce believers who underwent mystical experiences and accompanying physical manifestations which were, according to Korean evangelical theology, not supported by biblical teaching.¹⁸

In Presbyterian Churches, there were not so many controversies and there was less emphasis on pneumatology before the matter became a prominent issue. However, once the Presbyterian theologians felt keenly the necessity of developing a clearer pneumatological viewpoint, they strongly rejected any idea of the supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit or the existence of spiritual gifts in the present time.

Pneumatological controversies in Korean theological circles have occurred in the context of Pentecostal teaching about the receiving of the

Holy Spirit, especially whether it is instantaneous or continuous. Mostly orthodox Reformed pneumatology has provided a theological basis which resulted in a negative criticism of glossolalia. For example, Abraham Kuiper¹⁹ emphasized that it was never expected that the Holy Spirit would again be manifested in the same way as at Pentecost again in view of the omnipresence, continuity and unchangeability of Holy Spirit. B. B. Warfield considered that special gifts, such as prophecy, glossolalia and divine healing never occurred in the contemporary church because they ceased at the end of the apostolic age.²⁰ Anthony Hoekema also considered that the miraculous gifts were terminated at the end of the apostolic age, and insisted that contemporary phenomena of speaking tongues was a human response which had a psychological explanation.²¹ Richard B. Gaffin pointed that the fundamental problem with Pentecostal teaching about Spirit baptism arose from the way the Holy Spirit was isolated from Christ. Regarding the gifts, he also maintained

19 Abraham Kuiper was a Calvinistic Reformed theologian and politician who had worked until the early twentieth century, and his thought contributed greatly to the development of the modern Reformed theology.

20 B. B. Warfield, *Miracles: Yesterday and Today, Real and Counterfeit* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1965), pp. 5-6; Richard Gaffin, *Perspectives on Pentecost: New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), p. 144.

21 Anthony Hoekema, *What About Tongue Speaking?* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1966), p. 128.

18 Bonjour Bay, 'A Historical Insight for the Radical Pneumatologies in Korea', pp. 439-40.

that glossolalia and prophecy vanished out of the church after the apostolic age.²²

In the 1970s, HyungYong Park introduced his pneumatology into *Sin-HagJiNam (Theology Guide)* serializing the article 'Baptism and Fullness of Holy Spirit' in the autumn and winter issues of 1971. Park's pneumatology was so influenced by the teaching of Charles Hodge and of B. B. Warfield, as a result of his period of study at Princeton Theological Seminary in US, that he stressed the un-repeatability of the Spirit's manifestation at Pentecost and the cessation of the spiritual gifts. From that time, writing in Korean Reformed theology focused on the identification of regeneration with Spirit baptism, which was a direct outcome of Park's *GyoWiSinHak (Dogmatic Theology)* (1972).

Thus, in the 1980s, SungJong Shin and HaiYun Kim and the like criticized glossolalia from the standpoint of the orthodox Reformed pneumatology which maintained the cessation of spiritual gifts. Shin said, 'Glossolalia does not originate only from the Holy Spirit, because the phenomena of glossolalia occurs not only in Christianity but also in other religions and philosophies.'²³ He insisted that the contemporary phenomena of glossolalia and prophecy could not be confirmed as spiritual gifts. Moreover, he took the view that prophecy and glossolalia which were

closely connected with apostolic and biblical documents ceased with the end of the apostolic period. Yet he also argued that there might be a reason that the glossolalia were not completely terminated because glossolalia originated not only from the Holy Spirit but also from the psychological, artificial and even Satanic sources.²⁴

HaiYun Kim pointed that there were some misunderstandings about Spirit baptism in the contemporary churches, and he said, 'I cannot possibly agree with the theories that when a man receives the Spirit baptism, he speaks in other tongues, and that only glossolalia is the sign of Spirit baptism. While there were people and disciples in the Acts who spoke in other tongues, the Bible does not say all believers and disciples spoke in other tongues.' He said, 'Since glossolalia that the Apostle Paul mentioned and glossolalia in the Acts are different from each other, it is not right to say that when a man receives the Spirit baptism, he must speak in other tongues.'²⁵

YoungBae Cha and YoungBok Ahn stood in the tradition of the recent

22 Richard Gaffin, *Perspectives on Pentecost*, p. 144.

23 SungJong Shin, 'New Testament Pneumatology: Especially focus on glossolalia', *Sin-HagJiNam* 48-2 (1981), p. 23.

24 Shin, 'New Testament Pneumatology', p. 38.

25 HaiYun Kim, 'Pneumatology(4): A Study on Baptism of Holy Spirit and Fullness', *HyunDaiJongGyo* (1984.9), 163.

Reformed Spiritual Movement.²⁶ They, on the one hand, defended the idea that their view of pneumatology was totally different from Pentecostalism which supported glossolalia; on the other, they emphasized that they followed the tradition of Spirit baptism in the recent Reformed Spiritual Movement and in the early Korean church revival.

Cha was cautious about the false phenomena of the various spiritual movements which confused the churches in those days, as he wrote the preface of the summer issue of *Sin-HagJiNam*. This referred especially to the warning about Pentecostalism and criticism of it which appeared in the Korean context as a big issue since the

1970s. 'Since Spirit baptism is the baptism which Christ alone gave by Holy Spirit, there must be a concrete consciousness of the death and resurrection of Christ when we experience it. Simple glossolalia without such consciousness is not the Baptism of Christ.'²⁷ As mentioned above, Cha's pneumatology does not seem to be related to Pentecostalism because he did not connect Spirit baptism with glossolalia.

Likewise, there was an issue about spiritual gifts in the Korean pneumatological controversies, for the definition of Spirit baptism would become totally different, depending on the position taken on the cessation of spiritual gifts. GilSung Kim introduced the theological concern of YunSern Park who returned from study in US in 1930s. In those days Westminster Theological Seminary followed the cessation theory of spiritual gifts on which B. B. Warfield insisted. When Park returned to Korea, he found that charismatic phenomena such as glossolalia and divine healing were so dominant in the pastoral field that he could not ignore the situation.²⁸

As far as SungKyul churches were concerned, while their theologians and pastors focus their attention on sanctification theory, so far they have not dealt with glossolalia as an object of specific discussion. UngJo Kim, one of the representative pastors and theolo-

26 Recent Reformed Spiritual Movement and Orthodox Reformed Pneumatology: The late nineteenth century American Reformed spiritual movement generally followed the holiness conception which is based on the counteraction theory or Suppression regarding the sinful tendency, meanwhile, it rejected eradication of sinfulness which was held by the Wesleyan Holiness Movement. The recent Reformed Spiritual Movement explained that the continuous victory from sin came from the life empowered by the Holy Spirit, and moreover, it emphasized Spirit baptism as union with Christ and power for service. The representatives of the line were Evan Hopkins, Handley C. G. Moule, Asa Mahan, Charles Finney, Dwight L. Moody, Reuben A. Torrey, Adoniram J. Gordon and A. B. Simpson. Yet, in contrast to those people, the representatives of Orthodox Reformed pneumatology were Abraham Kuiper, Charles Hodge, B. B. Warfield, Richard Gaffin and John Stott. The Korean theologians was so influenced by those foreign scholars that they have developed one pneumatological line which stressed the discontinuity of spiritual gifts and the oneness of Spirit baptism. Bay, *HanGukGyoHoiWa SungLyungSeLei*, pp. 14-5.

27 YoungBae Cha, 'Preface', *SinHagJiNam* (Summer, 1981), p. 6.

28 GilSung Kim, 'Reformed Soteriology for Our Era', Reformed Bible Institute (ed.), *Sung-LyungGoo GyoHoi (Holy Spirit and the Church)* (Seoul: HaNa Books, 1996), pp. 104-5.

gians of SungKyul churches, said that Spirit baptism gave believers holiness and power. But he rejected glossolalia, thinking of it as a particular temporary gift only in the primitive church.²⁹ In this way, SungKyul churches have traditionally maintained a negative standpoint on glossolalia. For example, when the issue of glossolalia aroused public criticism nationwide in 1960s, SungKyul Theological Seminary (now SungKyul University) faculty published a 'Letter of Explanation of Glossolalia', which stated: 'We, Jesus Korea SungKyul Churches, believe the Bible as the God's Word revealed, and identify ourselves as a holiness group which highlights Regeneration, Sanctification, Divine Healing and the Second Coming as an experimental faith rather than the enthusiastic sect of glossolalia and of oscillation and fainting.'³⁰ In short, regarding the essential nature of the work of the Spirit, the Korean SungKyul holiness movement, unlike Pentecostalism, focuses on the transformation of human life rather than charismatic experience such as glossolalia, prophecy and fainting.

5. After 1980s: Glossolalia Popular Inter- denominationally

Third Wave spirituality, with its repre-

sentative Vineyard Movement, has become a serious issue in the Korean pastoral and theological context since the late 1980s. The Third Wavers mostly regard glossolalia as a spiritual gift which is given to believers, and one which is for spiritual ministry or for effective prayer, rather than a necessary sign of Spirit baptism. In the light of such thinking, there has been a growing recognition among the Pentecostal believers and pastors that glossolalia is not the sign of Spirit baptism but one of the spiritual gifts. On the other hand, Reformed or Wesleyan-Holiness churches who held a negative view of glossolalia now accept it widely in their pastoral situations.

Peter Wagner distinguished the Third Wave from classical Pentecostalism and from the Charismatic renewal. He thought that baptism with the Holy Spirit was mostly considered as another aspect of regeneration, and that the ongoing experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit made a person a consecrated Christian.³¹ Also he did not emphasize glossolalia as the authentic sign of receiving Spirit baptism.

Concerning the experience of Spirit baptism, unlike the Pentecostals, most Charismatics do not stress the importance of glossolalia, but rather they place more stress on the importance of signs and wonders and of power encounter. They seem to regard glossolalia as one of the gifts of Holy Spirit that serve for the spiritual ministry and effective prayer.

29 UngJo Kim, *SungSerDaiGangHai (Bible Exposition)* (Seoul: SungChungSa, 1981), John—Roman, 10:201.

30 'Oscillation' is the shaking of the body during prayer time. 'Letter of Explanation of Glossolalia', *SungKyul (Holiness)* No.321 (1963), p. 66.

31 Donald Kammer, 'The Perplexing Power of John Wimber's Power Encounters', *Churchman* 106:1 (1992), p. 47.

When Wagner acknowledged his belief as a Third Waver, he mentioned that glossolalia was not the sign of Spirit baptism which could distinguish whether a person was Spirit-filled or not. From my point of view, this position was derived from the tradition of Reformed pneumatology of which he was part.

The current trends regarding glossolalia can be described as follows:

(1) It is apparent that there has developed a gradual tolerance to spiritual gifts, with the preservation of the motive of 'purity and power', in the tradition of the late nineteenth-century Wesleyan Holiness Movement.³² This is markedly different from the frequent schisms of Wesleyan-Holiness groups in the period from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth regarding spiritual gifts such as glossolalia.

(2) While Reformed theologians do not accept the use of charisma such as glossolalia and divine healing and the application of signs and wonders to practical evangelism, there are some cases where they try to allow them theologically.³³

(3) Meanwhile, in Charismatic Christianity, while classical Pentecostalism regards glossolalia as the initial sign of Spirit baptism, the Third

Wave, passing through the Charismatic Renewal, regards glossolalia as one of the various spiritual gifts. Accordingly, under the influence of such a trend, it is becoming clear that even classical Pentecostals are beginning to regard glossolalia as one of the spiritual gifts rather than the initial sign of Spirit baptism.

Moreover, Classical Pentecostalism reinforces the motive of 'Union with Christ' or 'purity' which were comparatively weak before. For instance, Yonggi Cho, the representative of classical Pentecostalism, said that his ministry became Spirit-filled again after he came to a new conviction about the Holy Spirit as the reality of the personal Lord in 1964. He also dealt with the subject of 'sanctification' or 'holiness' in the one chapter of the book *OJungBogUmGoa SamBagJa ChugBok* published in 1983 while he never mentioned this in his *SungLyungLon* in 1971.³⁴

Interviewing Full Gospel Church pastors, I have been told that there has been a gradual popularization among the young pastors of the view that glossolalia was one of spiritual gifts rather than the initial sign of Spirit baptism. The reasons for this development are that the Pentecostal church has been much influenced since 1980 by the Third Wave which regarded glossolalia as the one of spiritual gifts, and that the interpretation of glossolalia has changed from the Pentecostal emphasis into the general recognition since Yoido Full Gospel Church, the most

32 Bonjour Bay, 'Wesleyan-Holiness Movement, Its latest tendencies in North America', *YegSaSinHak NonChong* initial number, (1999), p. 287.

33 To study such trends, refer for example to: SungSoo Kwon, *JongMalGoa YoungSung (Eschatology and Spirituality)* (Seoul: HoiBbul, 1995), p. 101.; YongJo Ha, *SungLyungBaUn SaLamDul (People who received Holy Spirit)* (Seoul: Tyrannus Press, 1999), 1:522.

34 Yonggi Cho, *OJungBogUmGoa SamBagJa ChugBok*, p. 115.

representative Pentecostal church in Korea, has continually invited other denominational scholars and engaged in a lot of theological interchanges with them.

Such tendencies show that there might be some disagreement among the young Full Gospel Church pastors between their personal confession and their doctrinal creed. However, Cho's pneumatology, on the one hand, spoke for the Pentecostal position that emphasized glossolalia as the initial sign of Spirit baptism, while on the other hand, his pneumatology has been much changed in comparison with his early position. Such variation and development of Cho's pneumatology generally reflects the pneumatological development of classical Pentecostal pneumatology in Korea.³⁵ It can be admitted that current classical Pentecostalism is rapidly adopting a more reliable pneumatology, and taking a serious view of personal communication with Holy Spirit. Thus they are relating their pneumatology to Christology, in the same manner as the Reformed Spiritual movement, and they are accepting the dimension of holiness emphasized by the Wesleyan Holiness movement.

6. Conclusion

It was characteristic of classical Pentecostalism to identify glossolalia as the initial sign of Spirit baptism, an

experience which differed from regeneration. Yet in the current pastoral situation there is a growing understanding that glossolalia is one of the spiritual gifts rather than the definitive sign of Spirit baptism. Therefore, it seems that from now on, Pentecostalism will need to re-examine its theology of glossolalia.

It is hard to realize anymore that classical Pentecostalism could be characterized only by glossolalia. Since the Charismatic Renewal began, even people who were not classical Pentecostals have experienced glossolalia, and especially since the arrival of the Third Wave, glossolalia has been popularized inter-denominationally.³⁶

From my point of view, this means that the main issue for Pentecostalism is the development of a new theological understanding of glossolalia. In their study, modern Pentecostal theologians have found some problems regarding glossolalia such as: (1) glossolalia is not adequate as a characteristic to differentiate Pentecostalism from other religious movements; (2) as a consequence of concentrating on the practice of glossolalia, the analysts transferred their attention from the theological dimension to the sociological and psychological level; (3) their narrow focus on glossolalia obstructs wider understanding of Pentecostalism.³⁷

Meanwhile, glossolalia raises theo-

³⁵ Regarding the pneumatological development of Rev. Yonggi Cho, refer to Bonjour Bay, *HanGukGyoHoiWa SungLyungSeLei*, pp. 221-7.

³⁶ Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), p. 15.

³⁷ Bonjour Bay, *GaiSinGyo SungLyungLonWi YergSa (A History of Protestant Pneumatology)* (AnYang: SungKyu Univ. Press, 2003), pp. 143-4.

logical issues not only for the Pentecostal church but also for other denominations, because there are now many people who speak in other tongues in various denominations. While orthodox Reformed pneumatology insists on the cessation of supernatural gifts such as glossolalia or prophecy following the apostolic age, it is hard to prohibit them in the pastoral situation. Most Wesleyan Holiness churches fol-

low a tradition that has rejected glossolalia theologically, but on the other hand, the situation is the opposite at the pastoral level. Since in each case, the pastoral situation is different from the official denominational doctrinal position, it seems to be inevitable that theological mediation is needed to reconcile the two and to develop a new theological approach which will be relevant and applicable to the pastoral situation.

NEW FROM PATERNOSTER

Father of Faith Missions The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves

Robert Bernard Dann

Modest and unobtrusive, Anthony Norris Groves did not consider himself a gifted evangelist. His name is not usually mentioned alongside William Carey and Hudson Taylor, but Groves had a pioneering influence that went beyond his personal reach. He and his family followed God's call to Baghdad and India, leaving their comfortable

English lives behind. Though he doubted his success as a missionary, Groves' character and ideas shaped the people who followed him as he followed Christ. Exhaustively researched, *Father of Faith Missions* is not merely about the life of one missionary but also a record of Groves' influence on missionary initiatives and the Brethren movement. Drawing upon Groves' own journals and letters in addition to copious scholarship, this book is both a journey into history and a reminder that God's faithfulness is as true now as it was then.

Robert Bernard Dann is currently engaged in doctoral research on church and mission strategies, with particular reference to the life and work of Anthony Norris Groves.

ISBN: 1-88454-390-1 / 229 x 145 mm / 608pp / £12.99



9 Holdom Avenue, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK1 1QR, UK

Contextualization and Discipleship: Closing the Gap between Theory and Practice

Minho Song

KEYWORDS: *Contextualization, discipleship, context, worldview, folk Catholicism, folk Buddhism*

CONTEXTUAL theology has gained significant momentum in recent theological studies. Traditionally, theological reflection centred around two sources, scripture and tradition, but now it is virtually impossible to engage in a meaningful theological discussion without taking seriously the third source: context. Stephen Bevans argues that 'doing theology contextually is not an option... [but] is a theological imperative'.¹ Understanding the context of a particular people means to appreciate their culture and history as

well as the issues currently impacting their lives.

Towards the end of the 19th century, many mission agencies accepted Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn's three-self model as a guideline for their church planting projects. In order to promote the rapid growth of autonomous churches, missionaries encouraged the emerging churches to be self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing. But today such a model is considered inadequate because it lacks emphasis on the receptor's context. It is argued that even the theology of the emerging church must be self-generated, hence the term 'fourth self' of self-theologizing became important.² If context is

1 *Models of Contextual Theology*, revised and expanded edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002), p. 3.

2 Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), pp. 195-196.

Minho Song taught Missions and New Testament at Asian Theological Seminary, Quezon City, Philippines. He studied at Regent College (MDiv, ThM) and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (PhD). Currently, he is the senior pastor of Young Nak Korean Presbyterian Church of Toronto. His other articles related to discipleship and contextualization appeared in Journal of Asian Mission, Urban Mission, and Journal of Asian Evangelical Theology. This is a revised version of the article which first appeared in the OMF International's Mission Round Table: Occasional Journal for OMF Mission Research, vol. 1 no. 2.

ignored, the church runs the risk of being seen as a foreign enterprise with a foreign message.³ Dean Gilliland defines contextualized theology as

... the dynamic reflection carried out by the particular church upon its own life in light of the Word of God and historic Christian truth. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the church continually challenges, incorporates, and transforms elements of the cultural milieu, bringing these under the lordship of Christ. As members of the body of Christ interpret the Word, using their own thoughts and employing their own cultural gifts, they are better able to understand the gospel as incarnation.⁴

We must consider at least two important points raised by Gilliland in this definition. First, he emphasizes the importance of the church's self-theologizing, 'upon its *own* life... using their *own* thoughts and employing their (the church members') *own* cultural

gifts...' (Italics mine). The task of communicating the gospel message in a culturally meaningful and relevant way ultimately belongs to the national church, to its national leadership and to all the members of the church. Even though this task begins in the hands of missionaries, missionaries must look ahead and empower the national leaders so that eventually they will do their own theologizing.⁵

Second, Gilliland speaks of bringing 'elements of the cultural milieu under the lordship of Christ'. It is the church that must 'challenge, incorporate and transform' the elements of culture so as to bring these under the lordship of Christ. Contextualization must be understood in a comprehensive manner, covering not only the areas of Bible translation, the expressions of worship, leadership structure, and so on, but also the very fabric of believers' commitment to and involvement in society as *disciples* of Jesus Christ. In that regard, contextualization and discipleship are two concepts that cannot be separated.

3 Douglas Howard, 'Measuring Contextualization in Church and Missions', *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, vol 12:3 (July-September), 1995, p. 135.

4 'Contextual Theology as Incarnation Mission' in Dean Gilliland, ed., *The Word Among Us: Contextualizing Theology for Mission Today* (Waco: Word, 1989), pp. 12-13. For a brief historical survey on the term 'contextualization', see Bruce Nicholls, *Contextualization: A Theology of Gospel and Culture* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1979), pp. 20-36. For an Asian evangelical response to the concerns raised in the contextualization debate, see Bong Rin Ro, 'Contextualization: Asian Theology' in Ken Gnanakan (ed), *Biblical Theology in Asia* (Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 1995), pp. 3-17.

Discipleship and Contextualization

Discipleship is often overlooked in the discussion of contextualization. Gener-

5 This is particularly the case in countries like Cambodia, which was ravaged by the civil war and the genocide of Khmer Rouge (1975-79) during which most church leaders lost their lives. More concerted efforts are needed on the part of the missionaries working in Cambodia to raise up future theologians and writers who can reflect their own situation and give direction for the Cambodian church.

ally speaking, missiologists and missionaries pay attention to the initial communication of the gospel and try to ensure that their message is receptor-centred. When it comes to follow up and discipling new believers, however, the approaches taken are not as systematic or well-thought through. How does one disciple a Muslim background believer? How does one disciple a Buddhist background believer? How about those coming from the urban slums of Manila or from a Communist regime? If we are careful about how to package the gospel message for the first time hearers, then we should also be careful about how to package the follow-up and discipleship materials for those who desire to grow closer to Jesus. A typical result is that we have many decisions but very few disciples in our mission work.

The next two examples illustrate the problem I raise in this paper, that discipleship is often overlooked in the discussion of contextualization.

The first example was when I was at a discipleship seminar at a well-known church in Seoul several years ago. I met a worker who was evangelizing and discipling North Koreans who had escaped to China from North Korea. When asked how he designed his discipleship program, he simply replied that he uses the materials developed by some churches in Seoul. In his mind, the choice of such a material posed no problem since 'the language is the same for North and South Koreans'.

The second example took place not too long ago when I had a conversation with an American missionary working in the Philippines. He was excited to share that he had just secured the copyright of the discipleship lessons

used by a mega-church in Southern California. His plan was to translate these lessons into Tagalog and offer them at an affordable price to churches in the Philippines. I smiled at him out of courtesy, but I knew something was not right.

The above two examples amply illustrate the carelessness on our part in not taking seriously the role of context in cross-cultural discipleship. Even though most missionaries are aware of the term 'contextualization', in reality there exists a big gap between theory and practice. Sometimes, the gap between the theory and the practice rises due to the wishes and policies of sending churches or denominational mission boards. Missionaries or national leaders may not have the 'luxury' to listen to the people among whom they are working. Instead, they must listen to the wishes of the supporters who desire to extend themselves 'across the face of the globe, sincerely believing that this is the best way to win the world for Christ'.⁶

Discipleship in context or contextualized discipleship is an application of contextual theology in following up and discipling new believers in a cross-cultural setting. It takes the receptor's context seriously. It acknowledges, first of all, the simple and obvious fact that no one comes to Jesus in a spiritual vacuum. It rejects the assumption that the mind of the receptor is a *tabula rasa*, ready to receive everything the

⁶ Darrell Whiteman, 'Contextualization: the Theory, the Gap, the Challenge', *International Bulletin for Missionary Research*, 21:1, (1997), p. 5.

missionary has to teach about spirituality without any clash with or accommodation to the existing set of beliefs. Discipleship in context is based on the recognition that everyone has been captive to one's own spiritual or religious orientation before coming to know Christ (Eph. 2:1-3; Mark 8:20-23). The receptor's mind is far from empty or free. Rather, the mind must go through a fierce battle for biblical truths to be written on it.

Going back to the example cited earlier, we can see how the discipleship lessons developed by a church in Southern California are not suitable in a Filipino context. In the Philippines, evangelical churches are quick to adopt a discipleship program or a Bible study series popularized in the West. But because the material was not written with the Filipino audience in mind, it does not take into account the spiritual and social dimensions of the Filipino mind. The material does not touch the deeper structures of the Filipino worldview and psyche. Discipling a new believer who comes from a nominal Catholic background, requires a concerted effort to speak to the Filipino mind and heart.

The task of discipling Filipinos in their context requires us to examine the values and assumptions that the new believers bring with them.

Lessons on discipleship must penetrate the bottom level where people's animistic beliefs and assumptions can be challenged and transformed in obedience to scripture. Such an effort minimizes syncretism and encourages faithfulness to biblical truth.

In the same way, discipling North Korean believers requires a deep level understanding of their life under communism. For more than half a century, they have been indoctrinated with atheism. One wonders just how meaningful the statement, 'God loves you', is to a North Korean refugee hearing for the first time about a supreme being who is loving and personal.

Ultimately, a call to discipleship is a call to biblical worldview. Our task of discipling is to call people to the biblical worldview of truth. For this to happen, there must be a violent clash of two worldviews, the receptor's and that of the Bible. Sometimes, the task is compounded by the presence of another worldview brought in by the missionary. Melba Maggay writes,

Christianity in the Philippines is a 'sandwich religion,' a layer of Christian beliefs piled on top of a largely pagan slice of bread. We have yet to communicate in a way that truly wrestles with the people's worldview. We need to locate the Gospel at those precise points

The Spiritual Background of a New Believer

Fig. 1

Top Level	Evangelical teaching on discipleship
Middle Level	Catholic tradition and practices (nominal)
Bottom Level	Animistic beliefs and assumptions

where Filipino mythology and worldview differ from those of the West.⁷

Discipleship in context rises out of a dynamic interplay between text (passed down by tradition) and context. By paying attention to both the Bible and the context in which people live, we are then able to bring the task of disciple-making in a *culturally relevant* and *biblically faithful* manner.

For disciple-making to be effective, it must be grounded in the appropriate context in which people live. It is the context that allows us to understand the needs and issues of the new believers. Only after these needs and issues are properly identified and understood, can we then begin to design a curriculum that will help people to follow Jesus faithfully in their context. In short, borrowing discipleship materials or approaches used in another context ought to be resisted. Instead, national leadership must be encouraged and empowered to design their own curricula and approaches to disciple the new believers.

Discipleship without Context

Each context presents a different set of challenges for the followers of Jesus Christ. We can see this difference by comparing the context of the book of Revelation with the context of the book of Matthew. In the book of Revelation, John defines 'disciples' as those 'who follow the Lamb wherever he goes' (Rev. 14:4). They are the ones who per-

severe right to the end and come to the wedding supper of the Lamb by overcoming the world.⁸ To come out as victor, the followers of the Lamb must face the following two challenges:

- The relentless force of seduction by the 'Babylon' with all its glamour and charm, which is nothing but deception and destruction. The churches at Ephesus, Pergamum, Sardis, Thyatira and Laodicea were warned against this.
- The fierce force of persecution by the Beast which, in no ambiguous terms, demands worship from people. The churches at Smyrna and Philadelphia did not fall prey to this force and were commended by Jesus in turn.

John writes that seduction and persecution, the twin evils designed to illicit apostasy from the believers, will climax at the end. He urges the believers to live godly and faithful lives right to the end and arrive safely at the wedding supper of the Lamb.

In John's context, to follow Jesus means to overcome the world at all personal cost:

⁸ If we take the late dating of Revelation, the book of Revelation was written to the seven churches faced with the emperor cult (the worship of the emperor). These churches in Asia Minor adopted the emperor cult enthusiastically, '... possibly more than elsewhere in the Roman Empire' (I. Beasley-Murray, 'Revelation, Book of' in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament Writing*, p. 1028). Domitian was perhaps the worst of all emperors as he demanded that people address him as *dominus et deus* (Lord and God). As for the Christians, the pressure to avoid the emperor cult was compounded by the pressure coming from traditional religious cults. Together, they asked for a concrete response from the believers.

⁷ Melba Maggay, *The Gospel in Filipino Context* (Manila: OMF Literature, 1987), p. 4.

Yet, you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. *They will walk with me*, dressed in white, for they are worthy. He who *overcomes* will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but I will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels (Rev. 3:4-5).

Discipleship in John's context is different from discipleship in the context of Matthew's community. The main problem with the Matthean community was their group identity as God's people. Mostly composed of Jewish stock, the Matthean community stood at a crossroad between insisting on Jewish identity and facing extinction or enlarging their tent by reaching out to the Gentiles. Mission to the Gentiles was Matthew's answer to this community in crisis. Mission was used as a form of discipleship. The gospel of Matthew was written '... not to compose a life of Jesus but to provide a guidance to a community in crisis'.⁹

Discipleship in John's context meant resisting seduction and enduring persecution. Discipleship in Matthew's context meant letting go of one's identity and accepting God's plan for a new identity. We can see from these biblical examples that it is the context that determines the issues of discipleship. The text (the Bible) teaches us *who* to follow while the context teaches us *how* to follow Jesus. Needless to say, when we use transferable or generic discipleship material,

we miss out the important issues of a particular context that stand in the way of discipleship.

In the Philippines context, it is easy to identify corruption as one of the critical issues facing discipleship. Corruption is a way of life, rampant in every sector of the Filipino society.¹⁰ It stands in the way of the believer's spiritual maturity. Evelyn Miranda-Feliciano draws attention to 'a trilogy of maneuvers' deeply ingrained in the Filipino psyche, *lusot*, *lakad* and *lagay*. She defines them as follows:

- *Lusot* means to escape from something by wriggling into a hole or through a slit.
- *Lakad* literally means 'walk,'; a euphemism for making an attempt to smooth out difficulties by using a network of 'connections'.
- *Lagay* means grease money, payola, *tong* (when illegal gambling operations are concerned) or plain bribe.¹¹

Those who seriously desire to follow Jesus Christ in the Philippines, must deal with the problem of corruption. They have two important questions: 1) How do I stay pure from corruption? and 2) How do I help trans-

¹⁰ The Philippines ranks fourth from the worst in Asia out of 15 Asian countries rated and 92nd in the world in the Corruption Perception Index 2002 according to Transparency International. The country has the dubious distinction of having two of the top ten corrupt heads of the government in the world, those of Ferdiand Marcos (1972-86) and Joseph Estrada (1998-2001). See *The Wallace Report*, June 2004, pp. 19-20.

¹¹ Evelyn Miranda-Feliciano, *Filipino Values and Our Christian Faith* (Manila: OMF Literature, 1990), pp. 2-5.

⁹ David Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991), p. 57.

form this society from corruption? To quote Feliciano, 'How truly honest can a Christian be in a culture that has accepted *lusot*, *lakad* and *lagay* as a system operating outside legal and official policies?'¹² Discipleship material designed for a Southern California middle class church does not cover corruption since it is not a pressing issue for the believers there. Hence, by adopting a material intended for Southern California, the discipler conveniently overlooks the critical issues of discipleship in the Philippines altogether.

We can also talk about other critical issues in discipleship such as the residue of folk Catholic beliefs. They need to be brought out into open and evaluated as the new believer makes a fresh start in following Jesus wholeheartedly. There are also social values like *pakikisama* (being together) and *utang na loob* (the debt of gratitude) which are not bad in and of themselves, but which can be used to hamper Christian growth in the Philippines context. These values need to be discussed and transformed in the service of the kingdom of God. If they are not discussed, disciple-making will remain superficial and people's deep-level assumptions and beliefs will go unchallenged.

Steps in Contextual Discipleship

How then does one enter into another's culture and engage in a cross-cultural discipleship process? I will now pro-

pose several steps involved in contextual discipleship. Before we take the first step, we must first identify our own theological convictions about contextualization. Stephen Bevans discusses six models of contextual theology in his book, *Models of Contextual Theology*: the Translation model, the Anthropological model, the Praxis model, the Synthetic model, the Transcendental model and the Countercultural model. Of the six, three are of particular importance to us:

- *The translation model* starts with the text. It assumes that there is the supracultural, supracontextual essential doctrine. This essential doctrine is put into other terms in a way that the receptor can understand (also referred to as accommodation).
- *The anthropological model* starts with the context. The present human situation is the focus of divine revelation as much as scripture and tradition have been the foci of divine revelation in the past. Thus one needs to attend and listen to God's presence in the present context (also known as indigenization).
- *The synthetic model* believes in the universality of Christian faith. However, it does not define the constant in Christian identity narrowly in a set of propositions. Each context has its own distinctiveness to work out the universality of Christian faith. Thus, theology is a reflection of the context in the light of the text (alternatively called the dialogical model).

In advocating discipleship in context, I propose that we choose a model of contextual theology that pays due attention to both text and context. Of

12 Evelyn Miranda-Feliciano, *Filipino Values*, p. 6.

course, we must begin with text, the revealed Word of God. The core message has to do with the redemptive work of God in Christ. One thing we must keep in mind is that the existing category of Christian theology (e.g., the typical order of systematic theology) is not necessarily the best arrangement for people in other contexts. Thinking so is tantamount to ignoring the context.

The following approach to contextual discipleship utilizes the strength of the translation model and the synthetic model. In coming up with a contextualized discipleship material in a particular context, one must take the following steps:

- State the supra-contextual message of the Bible
- Identify the needs and issues of the context
- Create one's own discipleship material
- Determine the best pedagogical approach to the context

STEP ONE: State the supra-contextual message of the Bible

We do not need to start everything from scratch. That would be not only a waste of time but also a show of arrogance that God could not teach us through the findings of others. There

are biblical truths or themes that transcend all cultures and contexts. These have been already identified, deposited and passed down through two thousand years of church history (tradition) although we may disagree on how they are arranged. Nonetheless, the essential, supra-cultural message of the Bible can be agreed upon, as reflected, for instance, in the Lausanne Covenant.

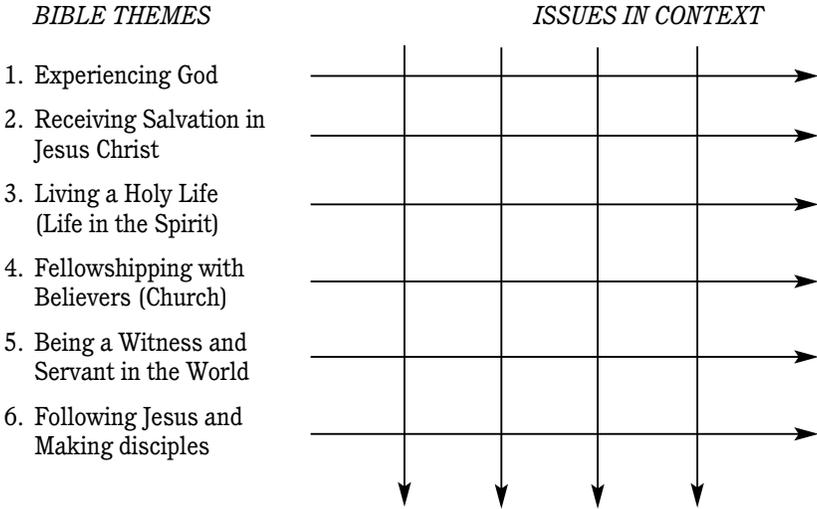
While I consider the interaction of text and context essential, I am not assuming that both text and context are culturally conditioned and relative to each other.¹³ I believe that there is a supra-cultural, supra-contextual message in the Bible, which has to do with creation and redemption. The redemptive work of the triune God is carried on in the world through the obedience of God's people (the church). The following are the six essential Bible themes I have identified. They make up the overall message of the Bible.¹⁴ These themes in turn interact with the issues raised in a particular context. Naturally, people in one context understand each Bible theme differently from those in another context.

¹³ Bruce Nicholls, *Contextualization*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁴ The number of the themes can vary, depending on how one regroups them.

Interplay between Bible Themes and Issues in Context

Fig. 2



STEP TWO: Identify the needs and issues of the context

The needs and issues of a particular context must be identified in so far as they bear on the task of discipling new believers. In other words, we need to ask, 'What are the issues that stand in the way of the new believers from becoming mature disciples of Jesus Christ?'

We can start with more obvious issues and move down to subtle ones. For example, one of the obvious challenges facing the Myanmar churches is folk Buddhism. It is so prevalent in the Burmese culture that a new believer in Christ must make a clean break from his past if he is going to mature in Christ. In my visit to the homes of Burman people in Yangon City, I have consistently seen two altars in their living room, a spirit house for Buddha and *payasin* (a spirit house) for *Nagana* (the

local spirit or a *nat*). While Buddha takes care of them in the afterlife, *Nagana* guides and protects them in this life.¹⁵ Their religion (folk Buddhism) is a harmonious response to these two sources of protection. A Burmese pastor told me that most new believers are still afraid of throwing out the altars when they become Christian due not only to the fear of the spirits but also the fear of rejection by family and neighbour.

When I visited a local Christian

¹⁵ His name is *Maung Tin Tae* and he is known as 'the Lord of the Great Mountain'. According to the legend, the king, afraid of the power of *Maung Tin Tae*, a strong blacksmith, burned him to death. So people today offer coconut and red cloth to him regularly. See D. Senapatiratne, S. Allen and R. Bowers, *Folk Buddhism in Southeast Asia* (Pnomh Phen: Training of Timothy, 2003), pp. 22-23.

bookstore in Yangon in order to look for discipleship materials, I was not able to find a single book that addressed the topic of folk Buddhism. Instead, what I found was the straight translation of discipleship materials by the Navigators and other para-church groups. Needless to say, in the Burmese context, part of discipling new believers includes giving instructions on how to make a break with the idols, both physically and spiritually. That is why identifying the needs and issues of the Burmese context is the first step in helping believers become serious followers of Jesus Christ.

If one were to examine the Filipino context, the following issues and needs will be part of the list:

- Debilitating fear of the spirits¹⁶
- Incorrect notions about God, Church, the Gospel, the Bible, prayer and so on (negatively influenced by nominal Catholicism)
- Extreme family obligations and other excessive demands on relationships (*pakikisama* applied wrongly)
- Immoral living, drinking, gambling and other social ills
- Corruption (*pandaraya*) at all levels of society and other societal and environmental problems
- Lack of material resources (dire poverty)
- The increasing gap between the rich and the poor.

Issues such as above need to be

identified and studied. Ultimately, we need to understand these issues from the perspective of the Filipino worldview. How do these issues touch upon the Filipino worldview? For example, how does their understanding of the spirit world deviate from the biblical understanding of the spiritual reality? An ontological analysis is in order.

While we ought to pay attention to the critical issues present in a particular context, we must also identify the *positive* aspects of context that make the task of discipleship easier. For example, the early rise prayer meeting has been an integral part of spiritual discipline in Korean churches. When we trace the early rise prayer movement in Korean church history, we find that it was an excellent model of the accommodation principle.¹⁷ In Korea today almost all churches practise communal, early rise prayer meetings as part of spiritual discipline and discipleship. This practice predates Christianity. To rise early in the morning and to pray to a higher power was a generally accepted and practised pattern in Korean spirituality. The Korean church has adopted this existing practice and utilized it in the church setting.¹⁸

In the Philippines, *Ninong and ninang* (the male and female sponsors) can be found at weddings. They promise to provide life-long counsel

¹⁶ For example, believing that *duendies* (spirits) live in termite hills, some people do not remove termite hills near their house even though termites can one day damage the wooden structure of the house.

¹⁷ The early rise prayer meetings began during the 1907 Great Awakening in Korea by pastor Kil Sun-Joo. See Kwang Soon Lee and Young Won Lee, *Introduction to Missiology* (in Korean, *Seon Kyo Hak Gae Ron*), (Seoul: Presbyterian Publishing, 1993), pp. 229.

¹⁸ Lee and Lee, *Introduction to Missiology*, pp. 229-230.

and wisdom to couples who are getting married. In a typical Filipino wedding, one can count several *ninongs and ninangs* who stand behind the couple, pledging their support. We can also ask how such a positive cultural (contextual) category can be used in discipleship. In the similar way, festive singing and celebration are part of Filipino social psyche. Due to the Catholic influence, Filipino people are very familiar with annual fiesta and celebration. These are important existing categories that, when utilized properly, can help take the discipleship process one step further.

STEP THREE: Create one's own discipleship material

Assuming that one is using other discipleship materials as a basis or a guide, there are three steps involved in creating one's own discipleship material:

- Eliminate topics found in other materials that are not relevant in one's own context.¹⁹
- Teach biblical themes that are supra-cultural, but show how they interact with the critical issues of

one's own context.²⁰

- Create categories not found in other contexts but are needed in one's own, based on the needs and issues of the local context.²¹

Some discipleship materials coming from the West reflect the cultural values of individualism. For example, despite repeated emphasis on the communal aspect of discipleship in Paul's letters,²² few topics are devoted to community life in Leroy Eims' famous book on discipleship, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making* (1978). In the appendix (pp. 159-180), the author presents thirty topics under the heading 'Training objectives for a disciple'. Of the thirty topics, only three are directly related to discipleship in community: Christian fellowship (#5), love (#17) and the

¹⁹ For example, knowledge-based, propositional truth claims are not that popular in the Philippines, much less the debate over predestination vs. free will; the proof of the existence of God is hardly an issue in the Philippines context. Even those who do not come to church believe in God's existence and accept God's will. For the Filipino, what is real is not a set of doctrines but what he is able to feel. Filipino theologian Jose De Mesa jokingly speaks of the Filipino 'worldfeel' (as opposed to 'worldview'), quoting from the special lecture delivered at Asian Theological Seminary, August 15, 2003.

²⁰ This is perhaps the most important aspect of contextual discipleship. For this step to be effective, the discipler must thoroughly understand the contextual issues of the receptors. Then, unbiblical issues must be confronted by the biblical norm. See Appendix 1 for a sample.

²¹ Western discipleship materials are bound to miss some of the critical issues facing non-westerners. For this reason, new categories must be created. Bong Rin Ro proposes that evangelical contextualization of theology in Asia can 'create new categories of Asian theology according to the diversity of contexts existing in Asia. Several areas have already been suggested such as the theology of suffering and poverty, the theology of change for the Chinese according to Confucius' Book of Change, the theology of demons, and the theology of evangelism under totalitarian rule.' 'Contextualization: Asian Theology,' p. 14.

²² Here are some examples of the 'one another' passages: Rom. 12:10; Gal. 6:2; Eph. 4:32; Eph. 5:19; Eph. 5:21; Col. 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:13; 1 Thess. 5:15.

tongue (#18). The other topics present discipleship as more of an individual journey with God. One of the possible reasons for this apparent lack of emphasis on community is that the discipleship movement in America was largely the work of para-church organizations (the Navigators, the Campus Crusade for Christ and so on). Moreover, Eims' book on discipleship was originally designed for use in campus settings, not in local church settings where community life would be emphasized more. At any rate, such an individualistic approach to discipleship is not only unbiblical but also alien to Asian cultures.

Working in the Filipino context, for example, one needs to give more attention to the communal aspect of discipleship (this is a supra-cultural theme in the Bible). But it must be presented in the categories meaningful to the Filipino social world:

- *Pakikisama*—the facility in getting along with others and maintaining a harmonious relationship
- *Amor propio*—self-love in Spanish, and means self-respect. It expects others to behave and avoid giving personal insult or shame (*hiya*).

Individuals are important in the Philippines context (*pagsasarili*). However, individuals find their identity in the group setting or in their family. In such a setting, everyone learns to value the importance of smooth relationships. Therefore, harsh and insulting words are to be avoided. An answer requiring 'no' is usually softened up by ambivalent phrases like 'maybe...' or 'it is possible...' In such a society, exposing someone to shame is the worst form of social condemnation possible.

STEP FOUR: Determine the best pedagogical approach for the context

When we consider the fact that Christianity by nature is an imported religion, it is all the more imperative that a pedagogical approach familiar to the local context must be sought and utilized. Effective contextualization involves the meshing of a foreign (Christian) meaning with a local form. Therefore, a proper contextual discipleship will result in the proper use of local forms, which have been proven to be effective pedagogical methods for the particular context over and over again.

Pedagogical methods for discipleship in the West typically include teaching (lecturing), small group Bible study, group sharing, one-on-one mentoring, short-term mission trips, and evangelistic outreaches. But in non-western settings, some of the above formats may not be as effective as when they are combined with symbols, ceremonies and rituals.²³ During the Holy Week in the Philippines, many Catholics engage in procession, in the reenactment of the Passion, and some

²³ See A.H. Zahniser, *Symbols and Ceremony: Making Disciples Across Cultures* (Monro, CA: MARC, 1997). Also see Jim Courson, 'Deepening the Bonds of Christian Community: Applying Rite of Passage Structure to the Discipling Process in Taiwan', *Missiology: An International Review*, 26:301-313 (1998). Citing the work of Swanson that 50 to 60 'decisions' are required to produce one 'lasting convert' in Taiwan, Courson proposes that 'a more contextualized approach to Christian discipling in Taiwan, based on a rite of passage model, will help the church more effectively incorporate new converts while deepening the bonds of Christian community' (p. 302).

even in the actual crucifixion. Symbols and rituals come alive, leaving powerful imprints in the minds and hearts of the followers, especially the young. The evangelical insistence on the Bible study (and the Bible study *only*) as a chief vehicle for discipling new believers, is simply one-dimensional in a multi-dimensional world. Even for a simple task like asking questions, we need to be careful not to be too direct in approach. For example, many Asians may be too shy or embarrassed to share their own family problems outright in a small group setting. But by asking them about someone else's problems, it is possible to eventually talk about their own problems. In short, we must be prepared to use pedagogical methods that are more natural to the receptors.

A look at Jesus' pedagogical style in Luke 14 shows his sensitivity to context as well as his creativity. Tension rises in the room while the Pharisees are zeroing in on Jesus and looking for a charge. Nonetheless, Jesus begins his multi-dimensional teaching on discipleship. Here are some characteristics of his teaching:

- Use of a real life situation (not in a classroom!)—on the Sabbath day, Jesus heals a man suffering from dropsy. It is no longer a hypothetical situation in a Bible study. The situation is real and stakes are high.
- Use of high context communication—Jesus was very much aware of what was going on in the room, that the Pharisees were carefully watching him and Jesus was also aware of what they were thinking; 'When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honour...' (v. 7)
- Use of concrete examples—'If one of you has a son...' (v. 5) or 'When someone invites you...' (v. 8)
- Use of a story (parable)—'A certain man was preparing a great banquet...' (v. 16)
- Encouraging people to think for themselves—'Suppose one of you wants to build a tower...' (v. 28)
- Grounded in spiritual principles—'For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted' (v. 11); 'In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple' (v. 33)
- De-briefing and reinforcement—Jesus ensuring that the disciples understand what is really being taught here (vv. 25-35).

Our pedagogy must fit the context of the receptors. The approach must be natural to the receptors. For example, if people are not used to reading books, then, it would not be effective to do an intense Bible study as part of the discipling process. The right pedagogy for discipleship must touch upon all three dimensions of human learning: the cognitive, the affective and the volitional. In the evangelical community, we are quite strong on passing on the right information (the cognitive). But sometimes we fail to capture the heart of the receptors (the affective). The use of symbols, drama, and rituals can be a powerful means to bring the message to the heart. Courson believes, for example, that baptism should be taken seriously in the Taiwanese context. He proposes that baptism is treated as part of contextualized rites of incorporation beginning on the Thursday before Easter:

- Thursday—the congregation shares testimony, song, Scripture

and meal together in retelling the story of *their* redemption; after this, fasting begins for the candidates until Sunday morning.

- Friday—the candidates spend the day in fasting.
- Saturday—the congregation stages a procession through the neighbourhood. The candidates take turns to carry a wooden cross. This is in close parallel to temple processions celebrating the birth of Taiwanese gods or goddesses. Church members distribute gospel tracks.
- Sunday—a celebrative pilgrimage to the ocean with baptism as highlight takes place. The congregation returns to the church in joyful songs of the resurrection. At church, neighbours, friends and relatives of the new believers are all invited to a feast. This is an important time of witness by the community of believers to non-believers.²⁴

The use of a procession and a meal invitation is quite natural to the local context. By employing such an approach, we are able to communicate the gospel message to people's heart, as well as to their head. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of pedagogy that fits the context of the receptors.

Discipleship in Context

Discipleship in context or contextualized discipleship is a receptor-centred approach to disciple-making. It pays attention to context while being faith-

ful to the supra-contextual message of the Bible. It also pays attention to how the supra-contextual message should be communicated.

In this paper I have argued that it is inappropriate to borrow discipleship materials from one context and use them in another context without making due adjustments. It is inappropriate because issues in one context are different from those of another context. By ignoring this difference, the discipler conveniently avoids the issues that must be dealt with, the issues that stand in the way of the believer's maturity in Christ.

I have given as an example the problem of corruption in the Philippines. Discipleship in context does not give us the liberty to conceal the problem of corruption in such a context. A serious follower of Jesus Christ cannot turn a blind eye to the structural evil of corruption and injustice. If a self-professing disciple of Christ is every much a part of the evil structure as an unbeliever is, then the church is in no spiritual shape to announce the reign of God to the unbelieving world. Therefore, every sincere disciple of Jesus Christ ought to ask, 'How can I stay pure from the temptation of corruption?' and, 'What can I do to cleanse this society from the stain of corruption?' Discipleship in context calls for an astute examination of the needs and issues of the context in light of the timeless and unchanging message of the Bible. It also calls for our commitment to raise up national leaders who will bring the gospel home to their own people. Discipleship in context is not an option, but an imperative.

²⁴ Courson, 'Deepening the Bonds of Christian Community', pp. 310-311.

APPENDIX 1: A Few Examples of Contextual Issues in the Philippines

<i>Categories</i>	<i>Examples of Biblical Truths</i>	<i>A Few Examples of Contextual Issues (in the Philippines setting)</i>
Experiencing God	<p>God is near. He loves us. We can experience him.</p> <p>God is also just. There will be punishment for the wicked.</p>	<p>How do Filipinos view God, gods & spirits?</p> <p>How does the Filipino understanding of the spirit world and the use of <i>swerte</i> (fate) and <i>bahala na</i> ('come what may') compare with the biblical understanding of God?</p>
Salvation in Jesus Christ	<p>We are utterly sinful before God. Christ died for us.</p> <p>We are redeemed from the sinful life when we put our trust in the <i>finished</i> work of Christ on the cross.</p>	<p>How do Filipinos understand the term 'sin'?</p> <p>Who is Jesus Christ? How do the existing concepts of Christ in the Philippines (such as <i>Santo Ninyo</i> or <i>Black Nazarene</i>) distort the biblical image of Christ?</p> <p>How does the Catholic teaching on salvation and works affect the way people understand the concept of forgiveness?</p>
Living a holy life	<p>We are called to live a holy life.</p> <p>The Holy Spirit helps us to lead a holy life.</p>	<p>How does a new believer overcome temptations imposed by his or her <i>barkada</i> (a social group prior to conversion)?</p> <p>How do people re-orient their understanding of true power?</p>
Fellowshipping with other believers	<p>Jesus calls us to be part of his Body.</p> <p>We are to love and serve one another.</p>	<p>What is the typical understanding of 'church' for those of us coming from the Catholic Church background?</p> <p>How do we love one another when we are in such a dire need for resources? How do we love one another when we are so divided along the socio-economic line?</p>
Bearing a witness in the world	<p>God calls us to be the salt and light of the world. We need to bear the image of God, who loves justice and mercy (Micah 5:2ff.).</p> <p>We are also called to bring Good News to all peoples.</p>	<p>How do we live as God's witness in this world? What can I do to make this world a better place to live in?</p> <p>How should Christians approach the problems of <i>lusot</i>, <i>lakad</i>, and <i>lagay</i>?</p> <p>How do we share the gospel message with our Catholic or Muslim neighbours?</p>
Following Jesus and making disciples	<p>Jesus calls us to follow him faithfully.</p> <p>We are also to make disciples of all nations.</p>	<p>What does a mature disciple look like in the Philippine setting? In the urban poor setting?</p> <p>What are the preferred ways of teaching discipleship concepts in Filipino?</p>

Farewell Gerasenes

A Bible Study on Mark 5: 1-20

John Lewis

KEYWORDS: *Sin, salvation, righteousness, regeneration, outreach, culture.*

ONE of the many challenges facing the church today is the growing demise of rationalism. This is not to say that rationalism will disappear, but it will increasingly be perceived and handled differently. Today more emphasis is being laid on experience, transience, and new technological dimensions that are increasingly able to give expression to the imagination. More and more discussions do not so much gravitate to the proofs of science, but the dynamics of feelings, relationships, and the experiences of life as it is encountered at the moment. This does not amount to a return to pre-modernist thinking, although links to Greek mythology and medieval mysticism can certainly be made. The new thought patterns of society have experienced the influence of modernism and interact significantly with new technologies.

In response to this shift in thought a number of new structures and methodologies are currently being offered to the churches, which increas-

ingly seek to be alleviated from the feelings of dislocation they are increasingly experiencing between themselves and society. However, many of these methods amount to 'dressed up modernism', which will serve only as temporary measures. The best of newly laid tracks will not change the fact that the train does not run that way anymore. The emerging changes are not so much about different beliefs, or even how beliefs are arrived at. What is so radically under constant change is society's conception of, and interaction with, reality itself. In the post-modern context beliefs are often transient, having significance only as they serve the needs of the moment.

There are many proposals of how Christians are to proceed in these circumstances, but we contend that a response based on the Word of God is essential. However, while resisting compliance to culture we must, in the midst of our changing conditions, avoid reading Scripture from a solely rationalist perspective, and engage with the Word as those seeking to proclaim it with relevancy to our new and changing cultural environment. It is for this

reason that I commend the reading of this passage that emphasizes its obvious relational and transformative features. It amounts to theology in the context of orientation.

1. A Theology of Orientation

This passage begins with the Lord moving across the lake of Galilee ‘to the region of the Gerasenes’. The readers know that this is a gentile area and that confrontation is imminent.¹ The narrative confirms this, since on his arrival Jesus gets out of the boat and is met by a man possessed by an ‘army’ of evil spirits called Legion.

The orientation of the Lord, who makes the initial move, is the necessary starting point of this most engaging narrative. He moves across the lake and then he gets out of the boat. It is an orientation guided by his love for the afflicted and oppressed, and his mission to enact the good news of salvation. Here we encounter an orientation from within God’s own being and towards his beloved creation. Here we find another echo of the orientation of God first spoken of in the first chapter of Genesis, when he ‘created’, ‘blessed’, and saw that ‘it was very good’.² This passage affirms again that humanity does not move to God in every increasing degrees of self-enlightenment.

Humanity is in peril and need, and God, in his holy orientation, moves towards her as saviour and liberator. As Donald Bloesch has stated, Christ is to be known ‘as the unbounded love that reaches out to us even in our sin and depravity in order to draw us toward himself’.³

The orientation of the Lord is followed by the orientation of the community. They orientate themselves against God and the changes he brings. It is a tragic picture of a world addicted to its own dysfunctions and an unwillingness to be released from the familiarity it brings. Not so for the man in chains. His liberation stands within the narrative as an event itself, yet reflects on the broader human dilemma. There in the tombs the horror of evil takes sway, with a destructive power that no one can subdue. It is a picture of screams, alienation, and self-mutilation. This is the state of the world in rebellion against God. It is a life lived among the dead—in fact no life at all.

In this narrative the orientation of the evil spirits is overcome and cast aside by the orientation of the Lord, whose mission is finally realized in the new orientation of the man ‘dressed and in his right mind’. Having been released by the Lord he can walk away from his entrapment and embrace a new life of praise and witness. However, he must orientate himself where he is. He seeks to go with the Lord across the lake, but is sent home to minister amongst his own. He must

1 The land of the Gerasenes is a ‘gentile land marked by a herd of swine. Even the name, “Most High God,” occurs elsewhere in the Scriptures as a gentile expression for God.’ R. A. Guelich, *34a Word Biblical Commentary: Mark 1-8:26*, (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), p. 288.

2 Genesis 1:1, 28, 31.

3 Donald Bloesch, *God The Almighty* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1995), p. 102.

stay where he is, but he must reorientate himself away from the place of the dead to the home of the living. It is a narrative of hope that addresses every human dilemma. Having been met by God each one can say farewell to the land of the Gerasenes, which here appears as a by-word for a rebellion against God, and embrace a new orientation directed to his glory.

2. The Orientation of God

The orientation of God in this passage exemplifies an action that emerges out of what Karl Barth termed God's 'divine loving'.⁴ It is a love that orientates God towards his creation. It is an orientation that leads to his presence, since God seeks fellowship with the crown of his creation. Indeed, Geoffrey Bromiley describes Barth's doctrine of God as asserting that this love seeks 'unmerited fellowship'. To be sure, God is the Giver who, in his unbounding grace, 'turns in loving condescension to the unworthy'.⁵ The orientation of God that leads him to the outer places of the Gerasenes is also an expression of what Barth termed God's 'victorious will', that, imbued with holy love, does not surrender to the created order, but stands in opposition to whatever is in 'opposition to him'.

Because Jesus orientates himself to what is in opposition we can also term this event as an expression of his mercy. As Bromiley has observed,

Barth's contention was that 'grace implies mercy, for in it God meets a need. Through sin man has brought himself into a miserable plight and God has compassion on him in his plight.'⁶ As Jesus gets out of the boat he meets with the plight he has come to address. His orientation leads to the necessary encounter that follows from his holy power and sovereign dominion over all. Barth affirms this in his assertion that 'God alone rules'.⁷

The result of the Lord's orientation is witnessed today in the church. Thomas Torrance explained Barth's conviction that the church 'is not a society of individuals who band themselves voluntarily together through a common interest in Jesus Christ', but a divine organization, the product of the will of God, 'the result of his love in giving himself to mankind to share with them his own divine life and love, and so to share with them knowledge of himself'.⁸ Therefore the church in every way must stand as a responsive declaration to the loving and gracious orientation of God toward his creation. Churches must subdue their logic and respond from the heart to God's orientation of love for the lost and the dynamic witness to which he calls them. The orientation of God must lead to a response of one kind or another. Here the orientation of the Lord is met by three distinctive responses.

⁴ G. Bromiley, *Introduction to the Theology of Karl Barth* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1979), p. 74.

⁵ G. Bromiley, *Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 74.

⁶ G. Bromiley, *Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 75.

⁷ G. Bromiley, *Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 146.

⁸ T. F. Torrance, *Karl Barth: Biblical and Evangelical Theologian* (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1990), p. 49.

3. The Orientation of the Nations

Firstly we note that the evil spirits, called Legion, are taken over by their fear of God's presence. Until this moment they had held sway by acts of evil, which ultimately amounted to the horror that eschews humanity's separation from God. This passage clearly illustrates a world gripped by sin. While God's judgement is on the basis of wilful acts of moral and spiritual rebellion,⁹ scripture clearly portrays humanity as existing in the sin of Adam,¹⁰ an existence that can be escaped only by embracing a new life in the freeing victory of Jesus Christ. As Barth so rightly claimed, humanity learns from Jesus Christ that it exists in sin, the extent and gravity of sin, and the judgement that results because of it. Yet the hope of the Scriptures is in the fact that they point in the right direction.¹¹

The progression from entrapment to freedom, which is brought about by Christ and results in a new life, is given full and dramatic expression in the narrative now under discussion. It is a scene of separation that is overturned by the Lord's arrival. He comes as Lord and Saviour, and his redeeming love is unstoppable. Here we witness the miracle of sinful rebellion and the domain of evil transformed by Christ into faithful obedience. It manifests itself as a change of orientation from self to God. Thomas Torrance agrees with Barth

that it is a message addressed to the individual, 'as a creature directly addressed by God and summoned within his historical existence to live his life not out of himself but out of God'.¹²

We secondly note the fear of the people of the Geresanes, which manifests itself differently. They reflect the fear of the world that remains in opposition to God, since it is untouched by his love. They are content with their debilitating condition, since it offers a familiarity they have come to know and master. They are addicted to their abuse and demoralization that takes away everything of worth, and leaves only the cruel delusion of power. As Donald Bloesch has wisely observed, sinfulness results in a disposition to want power over others. This contrasts with 'the divine imperative to serve others'.¹³

In this narrative the orientation of the healed man is contrasted with the dismissive and annoyed orientation of the people who have lost their power. This is a fearful scene for the unrepentant, and in their fear they plead that Jesus leaves, since they do not want the change he brings. Barth describes this state of humanity as the pride, which lies at the root of sin. To be sure, '(i)n his pride man incurs the guilt of resisting God, denying his glory, and disrupting his order'.¹⁴

Today the people of God must real-

9 2 Corinthians 5:10; Galatians 6:7; Romans 14:12.

10 Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:21.

11 G.Bromiley, *Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 185.

12 T.F. Torrance, *Karl Barth: Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, p. 5.

13 D. Bloesch, *Jesus Christ* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1997), p. 45.

14 G.Bromiley, *Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 187.

ize that they do not live in an environment of statistics waiting to be gathered in, but in a hostile world in rebellion that can be changed only by the power of God who calls a people to minister in Word and Spirit.

4. The Orientation of God's People

As a result of the Lord's orientation we can observe the third response—an encounter that results in a 'freedom and its power', which leads to a new existence in Christ called righteousness. As Barth claimed, '(r)ighteousness must be seen as a determination of the love of God'.¹⁵ Indeed, the kingly mastery of Jesus over the evil powers is an encounter that leaves the man 'dressed and in his right mind'. The Lord's orientation toward him has resulted in a spiritual revolution that has enabled the man of the Gerasenes to orientate himself toward Jesus Christ and his fellow humanity.

Today Christians can proclaim that it is an orientation originating from faith in Jesus Christ, who brings about a freedom that, as Barth put it, 'takes place as the root of unbelief is pulled out by the awakening power of the Holy Spirit'.¹⁶ The resulting 'new birth' this passage illustrates is a dramatic event the church has come to refer to as regeneration. Spiritually, Christians have all died to the old self, separate from God, tormented and alone, and have been born in into a new existence alive with the hope of God and orien-

tated towards his purposes. F.L. Forlines alludes to this in his belief that in regeneration people are made a new creation, with a new direction in life.¹⁷ He concludes that, as Christians, regeneration results for us in 'a different attitude toward sin and Jesus Christ, resulting in 'a basic desire in our heart to do right and be right with God'.¹⁸

This new disciple had a new orientation born of the faith with which Christ had blessed him. Barth was instructive when he stated that the orientation of faith in Jesus Christ originates with him and results in the constitution of the new Christian, who is free to acknowledge, recognize and confess that Jesus Christ is specifically for them.¹⁹ The grace of God that orientates itself toward humanity, and the resulting orientation of faith, is at the heart of this narrative. The faith that leads to a new orientation in life was stressed by Karl Barth. Barth, whose claims that he was not a universalist should be taken more seriously,²⁰ exhorts us to see faith 'as the authentic response to God's faithfulness' which leads to 'the humility of obedience'.²¹

As this freed new disciple orien-

¹⁷ 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10.

¹⁸ F.L. Forlines, *Biblical Systematics* (Nashville: Tenn. Randal House, 1975), p. 190.

¹⁹ G. Bromiley, *Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 195.

²⁰ D. Dayton, 'Karl Barth and Evangelicalism: The Varieties of a Sibling Rivalry', *(TSF Bulletin)*, May-June, 1985), p. 21.

²¹ G. Bromiley, *Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 190.

¹⁵ G. Bromiley, *Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 75.

¹⁶ G. Bromiley, *Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 195.

tates himself towards the life of obedience he scans the distant horizon with all it promises, and seeks to go there with Jesus. However, the Lord denies his request and instructs him to go home and bear witness to his family. This command tells us about the orientation God's people are called to; this disciple must consider his own space, in his own environment, and the opportunities it provides for God's service. Indeed, his great and holy calling is to be a minister of Christ where he stands.

The message this delivers for Christians today is straightforward enough, yet distinct from many of the courses that have sometimes been chosen. Christians have too often orientated themselves on the basis of coveting other people's success, and how it all can assist in procuring their own in the days ahead. However, this preoccupation with the lure of what tomorrow can bring can deaden spiritual vitality. Indeed, we are not called to consider the success of tomorrow but the sanctity of the moment.²² Here, where we stand, now at this time, we are commanded to bear witness to the light of Christ, and minister with his equipping.

Success is in existing solely for Jesus Christ, and therefore orientating our hearts to the praise of his name, and an obedience that leads to service and witness. Christ compels us in this narrative to realize that we will impact our communities only so long as we proclaim and live the transformative, freeing and renewing power of God,

which is the love of God in Jesus Christ. Not as we plan for it in the future, but now, in the moment we exist in as we encounter the burden of our own space and time. We can either look upon each moment as a reminder of a dull existence that needs constant escaping from by planning and forecasting, or we can come to our senses and behold *the meaning of each hour* as holy time, given by God, the flow of life as it comes before us for ministry. To this living flow we are called to pronounce the blessing of God, with our words, hearts and actions. Martin Buber was right when he contended that '(t)here is something that can only be found in one place. It is a great treasure, which may be called the fulfilment of existence. The place where this treasure can be found is on the place on which one stands.'²³

Karl Barth is well equipped to teach us about responding to our environment with ethical veracity founded on the living Word. In recent times there have been some, unable to tackle Barth intellectually, who have seriously questioned his moral integrity. However, there is no evidence that he ever had an affair with his personal assistant, Charlotte von Kirschbaum. Rather, Barth was a man of the Word, with a deep pastoral heart for people and an enduring concern for the world in which he lived. Barth understood well the orientation to which the Lord's people are summoned. Indeed, it is as 'addressed by God and summoned within his historical existence

22 Matthew 6:34.

23 S. Noveck, *Contemporary Jewish Thought: A Reader* (New York: B'nai B'rith Department of Adult Education, 1963), p. 285.

to live his life not out of himself but out of God'. It was for this reason that Barth believed that Christ was able to make a total claim on the whole of one's existence, a claim 'that will not allow any part of it to elude God's creative and redeeming purpose'.²⁴

Conclusion

This passage in Mark's Gospel is a narrative of orientation. Here one finds the primacy of the orientation of God, which is met by three distinct orientations: the orientation of the evil spirits, the orientation of the world, and the very different orientation of God's new disciple. It is a narrative that calls the church to consider her own heart as a reflection of God's love for his creation, however rebellious. Therefore a passion borne of God must replace institutionalism and its needs, if the gospel is

to resonate in today's emerging culture. Furthermore, the witness of the people of God, as they orientate themselves to him and his ministry in the world, must be seen as the most powerful tool available in today's relational and experiential culture.

A world gripped by rebellion has become indifferent to our tactics. What is needed is God's powerful love proclaimed and lived by God's people as they live their faith in dialogue with surrounding communities, as they proclaim the Word and witness to the Spirit in prayer and ministry. The result is to see church differently, in a very different world—indeed, seeing church life and outreach as an expression of the orientations this passage narrates. The orientations of God, of evil, the world, and the people of God must all be brought into account as we pray the longing of our hearts, to see people farewell the land of the Gerasenes, and all it represents, and embrace a new life orientated towards the life, witness and service of Jesus Christ.

²⁴ T.F. Torrance, *Karl Barth: Biblical and Evangelical Theologian*, p. 5.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY & EXEGESIS

A major achievement in Old Testament studies, this comprehensive five-volume dictionary is an invaluable study aid for all involved in the analysis and exposition of the Old Testament.

'When dictionaries and encyclopaedias are multiplying, NIDOTTE looks set to become the standard work in this field for all who respect the Bible.'

Alan Millard (Rankin Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages, University of Liverpool)

0-85364-834-4 (5 volume set) / £169.99

Paternoster, 9 Holdom Avenue, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK1 1QR, UK

Books Reviewed

Reviewed by John Lewis
Dr Kurt Anders Richardson
*Reading Karl Barth: New Directions for
North American Theology*

Reviewed by David W. McKinley
George M. Marsden
Jonathan Edwards: A Life

Reviewed by Michael F. Bird
Larry W. Hurtado
*The Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus
in Earliest Christianity*

Reviewed by Robert J. Vajko
Trev Gregory
*Mission Now: Developing a Mission
Lifestyle*

Reviewed by David Parker
William J. Abraham
The Logic of Renewal

Reviewed by Paul Joshua Bhakiaraj
Bob Robinson
*Christians Meeting Hindus: An Analysis
and Theological Critique of Hindu-Christ-
ian Encounter in India*

Reviewed by Keith Warrington
Amos Yong
*Beyond the Impasse. Toward a Pneuma-
tological Theology of Religions*

Reviewed by David Parker
David F. Wells
*Above all Earthly Pow'rs Christ in a
Postmodern World*

Reviewed by Joseph Too Shao
Joseph Blenkinsopp
*Treasures Old and New: Essays in the
Theology of the Pentateuch*

Reviewed by David Parker
David Wenham
Paul and Jesus: The True Story

Reviewed by David Parker
Christine A. Mallouhi
*Miniskirts, Mothers and Muslims: A
Christian Women in a Muslim Land*

Reviewed by Tony Richie
Thomas C. Oden and J. I. Packer.
One Faith: The Evangelical Consensus

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

Editor: Colin Brown

A four volume set offering concise discussions of all the major theological terms in the New Testament against the background of classical and koine Greek, the Old Testament, Rabbinical thought and different usages in the New Testament.

0-85364-432-2 / 4 Volumes, total 3506pp / hb / 240x165mm / £119.99

Paternoster, 9 Holdom Avenue, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK1 1QR, UK

Book Reviews

ERT (2006) 30:3, 272-273

Reading Karl Barth: New Directions for North American Theology

Kurt Anders Richardson

Grand Rapids: Baker Academic
2004.

ISBN 0-8010-2729-2

Pb pp 246 bibliog index

Reviewed by John Lewis, Adelaide, South Australia.

Kurt Anders Richardson, professor in the faculty of theology at McMaster University in Canada, has produced an engaging and detailed study of Karl Barth in the North American context.

Richardson comes to this publication after a lengthy sojourn with Barth. This is an essential qualification.

Misinterpretations have too frequently dominated the evangelical landscape.

These have often resulted in Barth being interpreted as an icon of Kantianism.

Conversely, Richardson's distilled wisdom rightly attests to Barth's 'immense testimony to the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ'. To be sure, God's Word revealed in Jesus Christ dominated Barth's thought, most evidently as it emerged out the crisis experience he had while serving his congregation at Safenwil.

Richardson succinctly summarises these important years of transition. As he does, it becomes apparent that Barth's intention was to be 'interested only in how revelation can be heard to speak on its own terms, into all of life, by re-creating that life in the confession of faith and the obedience of the church'. The author is also right in observing that Barth's theology of the Word continued to demonstrate a loy-

alty to the Reformation. 'In particular, his constancy with reference to Luther and Calvin and to the traditions that emerged out of them never left him.' Indeed, Barth was an advocate of continual reform that is 'sensitive to the demands of the Holy Spirit, who is Lord of the Word' and who brings 'the church into ever-greater vital conformity to the truth of that Word'.

Consequently Barth found himself again and again being tested by that Word 'the Word of revelation, of God's self-objectification, of gracious election, of creation, of justification and sanctification, and finally of faithful obedience—in all the living, freeing, loving Word of the Triune God in and through Jesus Christ'. Richardson also correctly describes Barth as a Reformed theologian who 'holds to the particular relation between Scripture and all other statements of doctrine and interpretation in the history and life of the church'.

The correlation between Barth's work and postmodernity is of particular interest to current theological and ecclesiological debate. In response to this issue Richardson makes the observation that postmodernism 'makes much of the demise of the so-called grand narrative', evident in such conceptions as 'religious individualism'. Here Richardson believes Barth has a part to play, since 'he is post-modern in the sense of believing that one must go beyond this position to something truer, something that grasps the reality of God more fully. Religious individualism is not so much a wrong path as an incomplete one.' To be sure, Richardson contends that a postmodern reading of Barth will produce some of the most inventive uses of his work. 'Barth's early rejection of what was quintessen-

tially modern, liberal theology, cannot help but be interpreted as postmodern in some basic sense.' But what of reading Barth from an American perspective?

Richardson reveals that he reads Barth 'because his work is such a turning point in Christian theology'. However, not all North Americans have been as receptive. The author starts with Van Til's misunderstanding before highlighting Gordon Clark's accusation of irrationalism and biblical fallibilism. Richardson is right when he points to the problematic nature of the fundamentalist critique of Barth. They were so heavily encased in their own 'metaphysical and logical assumptions' that an accurate grasp of Barth's thesis was beyond them. Barth, however, found a favourable response with the Yale Divinity School. Here Richardson points to Hans Frei's appropriation of Barth 'by making Scripture the fundamental source of meaning in theology'. However, the author's reviews of evangelical, Catholic, and Orthodox, receptions are so succinct that it seems unnecessary to have included them. Yet his discussion on the heart of North American theology, and its interaction with Barth, is Richardson's obvious interest, and this he does well.

Richardson believes that 'North American Christianity extended the Reformation search for an original experience of faith while at the same time seeking to transplant and to preserve its Old World forms of faith'. He contends that such a high degree of religious divergence led to an abandonment of the Puritan model of the state and an embracing of the concept of religious liberty, shaped as it was by 'the duties of personal conversion: repentance, personal duty, prayer, and vocation'. To be sure, while all groups affirmed the God of Jesus Christ their differences created 'a strained willingness' to live with fallibility. Nevertheless, this did not produce a

broad subjectivity. Instead, it gave birth to a form of *critical realism* much like Barth's own. Barth held to both a realism founded on the objective self-revelation of God in Christ, and a recognition that humanity will always approach knowledge on the basis of its sinfulness. This is certainly Barth's understanding of Scripture as the Word of God. He understood Scripture as revelation, 'but yet through human witnesses, the authors of Scripture, and those whose witness of the Word of God is recorded in Scripture'.

The author concludes by affirming that just as Barth is able to define the past, so is he a worthy guide for the continuing pilgrimage of North American theology beyond modernism. 'Barth assists us in finding healing after the great losses of modernist theology.' However, one can not simply follow after Barth, since his 'answers are not our answers'. Nonetheless, Barth would have us adopt a theology of Word and Spirit, 'all centred on Jesus Christ and his mediatorial and Trinitarian role for the life of the church and the world.'

A degree of similarity exists between Richardson's work and the recent republication of John Howard Yoder's essays. Both reflect on North America's engagement with Barth and discuss the importance of Barth's theology of the Word of God. None the less, there are noticeable differences. While Richardson seeks to assess Barth's interaction with North American Christianity, Yoder responds to Barth as a Mennonite, therefore discussing Barth's strengths and weaknesses according to a pacifist agenda.

ERT (2006) 30:3, 274-275

Jonathan Edwards: A Life

George M. Marsden

New Haven: Yale University Press,
2003

ISBN 0-300-09693-3

Pb pp 512 bibliog, index,
illustrations

*Reviewed by David W. McKinley, Central
Schwenkfelder Church, Worcester, PA*

George Marsden's, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* is a masterful work, covering the life's duration of America's greatest theologian and philosopher. Many biographies have surfaced relating to Edwards, yet Marsden's is the first in several decades. What is intriguing about Marsden's book is that it highlights the times of adversity encountered by Edwards at each turn in his life: from the tumult of a student uprising at Yale to living with his parents as a young adult. Other instances include his being ousted from the pastorate at Northampton, the political pitfalls and Indian fears at Stockbridge and ultimately his untimely death of smallpox after arriving at Yale as president. Through each trial, Marsden portrays Edwards as a steadfast, yet vulnerable figure who endures much for the causes of faith and principle.

In addition, the reader obtains a helpful profile of each participant in Edwards' life, as in immediate family members such as wife Sarah or daughter Jerusha. There are also encounters with young ministerial followers such as Aaron Burr and Timothy Dwight, or even professional enemies such as Charles Chauncy and Elisha Williams. Marsden is helpful by educating the reader not just on Edwards the man, but on others who interacted with him.

Marsden shows Edwards' true colours, as well. Unlike biographies which venerate their subjects, Marsden reveals a very human Jonathan Edwards. For instance, there is the high importance Edwards placed upon truth to the extent that he was socially inept. Edwards also admitted to clumsily handling the *Young Folks' Bible* incident and the communion controversy, which eventually led to his ousting from Northampton. There is immense value in this honest portrait of Edwards as someone with whom we can identify, albeit a high-profile Congregational minister in the mid-1700s.

Marsden sets Edwards apart from the other clergy of his era by portraying him as a pioneer of sorts. Edwards' *New Light* convictions that genuine revival was a necessity to the renewal of the church made him different from many of the others of his time. For that reason he developed a following of young ministers and laid the groundwork for the institution that would later become known as Princeton University. Furthermore, Marsden portrays Edwards as an international figure. From the very beginning of his post-Yale days, Edwards saw himself as making a global contribution to theology and philosophy, possessing a special relationship with *New Light* figures in Scotland. He achieved this not only with *A Personal Narrative* but also with his many other publications as they reached the British Isles and elsewhere. Of special benefit are the historical contexts surrounding Edwards' masterpieces such as *Religious Affections*, *Original Sin*, and *Freedom of the Will*. Such contributions prove Edwards to be as some have said, 'The Father of the American Church'.

Marsden's purpose in writing, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* is to bring together two kinds of interests in the early American Puritan. The author states, 'One of my

hopes is that this book may help bridge the gap between the Edwards of the students of American culture and the Edwards of the theologians.' However, by way of critique, Marsden often refers to the Calvinism that Edwards adhered to, yet never expounds on what that term means. To the theologian, a system of thought so popular and prevalent among the New England ecclesiastical establishment is easily assumed. To others outside of that fold, however, Edwards' Calvinism needs explanation. Marsden fails to do that, leaving too much to be assumed.

Overall, George Marsden's *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* is a biography that both informs and transforms its readers. It is easy to see why it has won such prestigious recognition as the 2004 Bancroft Prize in American History and as a finalist for the 2003 National Book Critics Circle Award. Its presentation makes it easily accessible to the educated lay reader or to the serious student of history and theology. Its evangelical sympathies are most refreshing to those of us who are weary of secular interpretations of faithful historical figures. It is a pleasure to recommend it to all that have an interest in revival history, American colonial studies, or the formation of early evangelicalism.

ERT (2006) 30:3, 275-276

The Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity

Larry W. Hurtado

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003

ISBN 0-8028-6070-2

Hb, xxii + 746 pp. bibliog., indices

Reviewed by Michael F. Bird, Highland Theological College, Dingwall, Scotland

Larry Hurtado (University of Edinburgh)

has produced several significant volumes on early Christian worship and Christology. In the current volume Hurtado's aim is to argue that (a) devotion to Jesus cannot be attributed to evolutionary developments in Christology or to external forces; (b) there is no genuine analogy for the intensity and diversity of devotion to Jesus in primitive Christianity; and (c) devotion to Jesus which attributed to him divine characteristics remained within the orbit of monotheism (pp. 2-3). As such, Hurtado's primary dialogue partner is the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule* in the tradition of Wilhelm Bousset's *Kyrios Christos* and similar works. By all measures this volume is well-written, thoroughly researched, and makes for compelling reading.

Chapter one examines the forces and factors that shaped Christ-devotion, including Jewish monotheism that funnelled devotion to Jesus in a binitarian direction, the polarizing effects of Jesus' career, revelatory religious experiences that led followers of Jesus to incorporate Jesus into their devotional life, and responses to the first-century religious environment.

Hurtado focuses on beliefs and practice reflected in Paul's letters in chapter two. He discusses Paul's background, Christological language, and Jesus' role in worship practices. Hurtado surmizes that Paul witnesses to a pattern of Christ-devotion that emerged in the years immediately following Jesus' death. In chapter three Hurtado explores material that testifies to Christ-devotion in Judean Jewish Christianity. This leads Hurtado to the conclusion that 'the most influential and momentous developments in devotion to Jesus took place in early circles of Judean believers' (p. 216).

Chapter four concerns Q and early devotion to Jesus. Hurtado surveys aspects of Q including the centrality of Jesus, the

reign of God, the absence of explicit reference to Jesus' death and resurrection, and its Christological motifs. Hurtado maintains that the devotional practices exhibited in Q do not represent a distinct version of Christianity, but contain beliefs in many ways consistent with other Christian writings. Hurtado explores the Gospels or 'Jesus Books' in chapter five. He suggests that the Gospels are a distinctive kind (or subgenre) of *bios* which has been adapted to suit the goals of the evangelists (282). He goes on to examine the various 'renditions' of Jesus in the synoptic Gospels (p. 283). Concerning the enigmatic Son of Man material, Hurtado asserts that it 'is not a *title*' (p. 305) but was constructed in 'bilingual circles of Jesus' followers to serve as his distinctive self-referential expression in conveying his sayings in Greek' (p. 304).

In chapter six there is a discussion of 'Crisis and Christology in Johannine Christianity'. Attention is given to the particular Christological emphases of the Fourth Gospel and how the Johannine writings demonstrate that Christological issues were foremost in causing the expulsion of believers from the synagogue and leading to the exit of the so-called secessionists. The non-canonical 'Jesus books' are investigated in chapter seven with particular attention paid to the *Gospel of Thomas*. Hurtado concludes that the heterodox Jesus books are distinguished from the others by, first, a particular and elitist claim that is exhibited in terms of secret instruction. Second, heterodox writings do not present Jesus as the climax of Israel's Scriptures. Third, such writings do not situate Jesus in the context of a strict Jewish monotheism (pp. 484-85).

In chapter eight Hurtado contends that the second century was a crucial period in the formation of Christianity and

Christians began to appear on the radar of Roman authorities. The developments in the later NT writings such as Hebrews, Colossians, Ephesians and the Pastorals are said to be indicative of how Jesus-devotion likewise developed into a 'proto-orthodoxy' in the second century. Chapter nine includes discussion of the 'radical diversity' in the second century centred on Valentinus and Marcion and their own form of devotional beliefs towards Jesus. The final chapter is about 'Proto-orthodox Devotion' in the second century and explores Old Testament interpretations in relation to Jesus, patterns of devotion in later Christian literature, and identifies the major doctrinal developments of the second century as being: Jesus' descent into Hades, Jesus as man and God, and divine Jesus and God.

Hurtado's *Lord Jesus Christ* is a must read for anyone involved in research on Christology or Christian origins. Those who find the 746 pages of scholarly discussion hard going may prefer the abbreviated, cheaper and more popular version, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005).

ERT (2006) 30:3, 276-277

Mission Now: Developing a Mission Lifestyle

Trev Gregory

Carlisle: Authentic, 2003

ISBN 1-85078-546-5

Pb pp 222

Reviewed by Robert J. Vajko, D Miss, The Evangelical Alliance Mission and Adelaide College of Ministries.

Here is a challenging contemporary book on mission mobilisation focused on a 'lifestyle' approach. Gregory describes this as 'a way of life or style of living that

reflects the attitudes, values and actions of a person or group' (p. 4). The three parts of the book deal with encountering a mission lifestyle, then describing a mission lifestyle for the church and finally developing a mission lifestyle—in that order.

The main contributor in Part I, Trev Gregory, starts by laying a biblical foundation for missions and moving the reader through the first chapter of Colossians. The goal is that the reader might understand 'who he or she is and where he or she fits into God's Kingdom and eternal plan' (p. 7). This 'identity' approach is felt by this reviewer to be a key to stimulating individuals in mission, particularly if they see reaching the world as the main theme of Scripture and not just a concern of some people in the church. But Gregory wants identity to move to belief and then on to action. The remainder of Part I defines mission, explains the different types of mission, and challenges the reader to get involved.

Part II consists of eight major articles written by renowned author and pastor, Andrew Murray (1828-1917), and come from his book *The Key to the Missionary Problem* written in 1901 for the Ecumenical Missionary Conference of 1900. Each one of these eight has been abridged and contemporised by Trev Gregory. The book by Murray is built around four major theses as follows: 1) Global mission is for the whole church and is the reason for its existence; 2) The role of church leadership is to guide the church in this; 3) All preaching and teaching in the church should have this as a goal; and 4) Every leader in the church should seek God's grace to accomplish this global vision. Gregory states that Murray's challenging vision needs to be brought to the forefront again in this way.

Part III is a final workbook section developed by Trev Gregory and another contributor, Greg Reader. It consists of a plan for a week of prayer for mission, a two step worksheet to develop a global vision, a plan to develop cross-cultural understanding, helps to making decisions about mission, and a section on short-term missions.

This reviewer was challenged anew in his vision for world missions by this book and in particular by the Moravian challenge: 'To win for the Lamb that was slain, the reward of his sufferings' (p. 80). This book has put together some of the best of Andrew Murray's writings on missions with contemporary challenges by the other two contributors. If readers take the contents of this book and work through the final section, they will certainly be deeper in their missionary commitment.

One drawback of the format of this book is determining quite who is speaking—Andrew Murray or one of the other two contributors. This book is not written by either a missiologist or a theologian but an 'ordinary Brit with a passion for global mission, young people and Europe' (p. viii). If one is looking for a challenged based on a scholarly approach to missions in the Bible much is available elsewhere. But if one is looking for a heart-warming challenge, this is the book. We need both those who have the gift of teaching and knowledge as well as those who have the gift of exhortation. Trev Gregory is to be commended for bringing us the words of Andrew Murray who, like Abel of old, being dead, still speaks and challenges believers today.

ERT (2006) 30:3, 278-279

The Logic of Renewal

William J. Abraham

London: SPCK, 2003

ISBN 0-281-5618-8

Pb pp 159 Index

*Reviewed by David Parker, Editor,
Evangelical Review of Theology*

This book attempts to understand and promote renewal by doing case studies of recent proposals. The writer (from Perkins School of Theology), known for several large scale works such as *The Divine Inspiration of Holy Scripture* (1981) and *Canon and Criterion in Christian Theology* (1998) has written a short, easy to read tract which he sees as the successor and extension of *The Logic of Evangelism* (1989). Its 'reverse engineers' ideas of renewal present a variety of exponents drawn from a wide spectrum of Christianity—Protestant (evangelical, charismatic, liberal), Catholic and Orthodox. He describes their assessment of the ills of the church, then examines their explanation of why these problems have developed and then their 'prescription as to how to put things right'.

Thus, for James T. Draper, of the Southern Baptist Convention, USA, 'decline is the outcome of the erosion of the true gospel by the major churches of the West', through the substitution of human reason in place of divine revelation. The solution is 'the recovery of the inerrancy of scripture as the foundation of the Church's theology'. For Donald Cupitt of UK, the problem is that 'the Church is wedded to a form of dogmatic theology that betrays the message of the kingdom'. The solution is for the church to 'rediscover the kingdom message of the historical Jesus' and 'come to terms with the evolving emptying out of the divine into

secular and profane culture'.

Each of the seven main chapters takes two examples of renewal, all of which present contrasting but related opinions, while one, the centre chapter, is devoted to two (Martin Luther King Jr. and Oscar Romero) which present the same general picture of 'dying for renewal' in the context of a kingdom approach, others which the author largely endorses. One which examined include Dennis Bennett, Lesslie Newbigin, Bishop Spong, Rosemary Radford Ruether and Cardinal Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict).

The chapters feature catchy titles, pointing clearly to Abraham's assessment of his subjects, which is usually presented very sharply. For example, chapter 6 is titled 'Trojan Horses from Paris' and deals with two individuals who had connections with the city of Paris—Alexander Schmemmann (Orthodox) and Gilbert Bilezikian (who is best known as the mentor of Billy Hybels of Willow Creek). In the case of the latter, Abraham is amazed that 'someone so committed to oneness should limit the unity of the Church as a whole to that found in the local congregation' and he finds it 'extraordinary' that a 'scholar of Bilezekian's training should expect us to see this as "biblical"'. His 'constant efforts to come up with "biblical" definitions of contested ideas like leadership and ministry are simply far-fetched and unconvincing'.

Another chapter is titled 'Quaking in the Ruins'. It includes treatment of Peter Wagner and his apostolic church model as presented in his book, *Churchquake* (1999) which effectively abandons the church as it has been known for two thousand years, and calls us 'to start all over again'. As far as Abraham is concerned, 'despite the excitement and the upbeat rhetoric', this is 'one more version of congregationalism, decked out this

time in a quasi-dispensationalist theology of history driven by superficial sociological observations', in which the 'biblical citations operate as a thin veneer of conservative apologetic' aimed at those looking for simple 'blueprint'.

After describing the ideas of renewal presented by each pair of subjects, the chapters end with evaluation. In the process Abraham skillfully presents in only a few pages an effective summary of often voluminous material and a finely etched cameo of each person's position.

Although it does help provide a clear 'map' in a context where the church is, as he says, 'currently awash in a sea of renewal movements' (almost to the point of drowning!), it can lead to a simplistic assessment. For example, Draper's Southern Baptist fundamentalism is presented as 'the Baptist position' as if there were none other that mattered from that tradition. Also Abraham's own assessments of the various subjects and his preliminary hints at a solution to the problem of renewal are presented without any detailed support, biblical or otherwise. Only in the last chapter does he attempt this task in a more thorough-going way.

This solution is, as Andrew Walker states in the generous Foreword, 'rooted in a pneumatological understanding of the historic and catholic faith' which calls for a 'recapitulation and reappropriation of the canonical heritage of the Christian tradition'. Abraham makes it clear that 'the key to the renewal of the Church is the varied workings of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life' because 'the Church is from the beginning to the end a charismatic community... brought into existence, equipped, guided and sustained by the Holy Spirit'. Although he thereby extends this 'canonical heritage' very broadly through the history and fellowship of the church to include charismatic

gifts, the fruit of the Spirit, offices, liturgy, creeds, canons and councils, in the end it is not developed very much.

Instead, the author gets sidetracked by his preoccupation with what he considers to be one of the main problems of the church and ideas put forward for its renewal-epistemology. Time and again he declares that renewalists have displaced or restricted this canonical heritage by focusing on intellectual questions and offered 'diagnosis and prescription in terms of some favoured theory of knowledge'. But he argues that 'we are not healed or saved by philosophy' but 'by the living God'. Furthermore, 'Christian scripture is not a norm in epistemology' and 'to press scripture to serve this end will lead to a deep misuse of scripture'.

However, as the book title indicates, he recognizes the continuing and growing importance of epistemology, especially in the light of the history of western culture. But it is necessary to distinguish 'ecclesial canons' from 'epistemic norms' and once that is done, epistemology can be given the serious treatment it deserves (perhaps as a 'new sub-discipline within theology, identified as the epistemology of theology') without high-jacking the main efforts of the church and especially its unity and its thrust towards renewal.

Although this is sound advice, readers applying Abraham's own technique of analysis to his proposal for renewal would find that it needs to be fleshed out much more than is indicated in this short book before they can go forward with it.

ERT (2006) 30:3, 280-281

Christians Meeting Hindus: An Analysis and Theological Critique of Hindu-Christian Encounter in India

Bob Robinson

Carlisle: Regnum, 2004

ISBN 1-870345-39-8.

Pb. 392pp. Bibliog. Index.

*Reviewed by Paul Joshua Bhakiaraj,
Mylapore Institute of Indigenous Studies,
India.*

Bob Robinson, presently teaching at the Tyndale Graduate School of Theology, New Zealand, has done all of us interested in interreligious relations a favour by producing this rich and stimulating book. It not only represents the substance of his doctoral research but also reflects on his first hand experience of living and working amongst Hindus in Asia. Consequently it is an academically sound and practically sensitive treatise on Christian-Hindu Dialogue.

The book has seven chapters discussing issues such as paths to dialogue; the meaning and practice of dialogue; justification of dialogue; a critique of dialogue; and the role of Christology in dialogue. The remarkable breadth that Robinson covers is not, however, achieved at the expense of any significant depth. In fact his detailed analysis and theological critique mines the depths of the theory and practice of dialogue as few others have done. After an almost exhaustive review of the literature on dialogue Robinson concludes, that though no precise definition or consensus has been reached, broad patterns seem to be discernable.

Dialogue tends to be one of the following: 'discursive', where clarity of understanding each other's view point is the shared

goal; 'secular', where joint action to address secular problems is undertaken; 'interior', where Christians prepare themselves for conversation or action and finally, 'existential', where direct and open acceptance of each other and their spiritualities is facilitated. However, knowledge of these patterns alone, he explains, will not facilitate a mature perception unless the manner in which these patterns are established is also understood. Both formal and informal dialogue will need to be recognized. While he acknowledges the significance of the latter, the former constitutes the major focus of the book. Formal dialogue is often 'implemented and maintained with institutional sanction' (p. 53) and may more often than not take place at 'Ashrams and Interreligious Centres', 'Live-together Sessions', 'Shared Worship' and 'Conferences, Seminars Consultations and Literature'.

Whatever form it has taken, both general and more theological reasons that motivate Christians in dialogue are important and Robinson serves as a mature guide here. But perhaps more significant is his observation on the manner in which dialogue has occasioned a change within Christianity itself. One, it has called for conscious and intentional reflection on the plural nature of society and Christianity's role in that milieu. Leading on from that, it has also motivated the search for an authentic Indian Christianity and its expression in an authentic Indian theology—the welcome promotion of 'dialogical theology' being one case in point. Consequently he affirms that dialogue is essential not only for 'secular' reasons of communal harmony, though that is a most urgent concern today, but also as a goad toward refining, even sharpening our Christian calling in the world. For Christians dialogue is thus

both externally and internally vital. Hence it is to be treated with the urgency and gravity it deserves, however at the same time not uncritically.

The ensuing discussion on Christology as the justification for dialogue builds on these observations. It has often been said that Christology and its attendant scandal of particularity is the bane of interreligious dialogue. In contrast Robinson argues that far from stalling the discussion even before it has begun, Christocentrism (a term he prefers to exclusivism) may actually provide a sound basis for dialogue. This, however, is qualified by four nouns—humility, patience, modesty and charity—which emphasize the ‘dynamic nature of dialogue as a relationship’, and that ‘orthopraxis should matter to the Christian as much as orthodoxy’ (p. 262). This qualified Christocentrism, he argues, is a specifically *Christian* approach to dialogue for it violates neither Christian self-understanding nor integrity, yet it does not necessarily exclude God’s universal revelation and action. This proposal is then articulated by establishing an Indian Christological basis for dialogue.

This is a rich and stimulating book. The depth of discussion and the almost exhaustive use of literature are only two of its many appealing features. However one area that I felt could have been more precisely defined was the fact that while the sub-title suggested ‘Hindu-Christian Encounter’ was the subject of the book, it actually tends to focus more specifically on dialogue. It would perhaps be more accurate if ‘dialogue’ was used instead of ‘encounter’ in the subtitle. The other comment that deserves mention here is that more recently discussions have moved on to include, besides Christology, the role of the Holy Spirit in the study of interreligious encounter. While Robinson

alludes to it, he does not elaborate and thus his work will need to be supplemented, for example, by Amos Yong and Kirsteen Kim’s recent work, if one is to keep abreast of the current state of the debate.

Notwithstanding those observations, it must be said that Robinson’s work stands as a model of a critical analysis of both theology and praxis of dialogue and a book that makes an important contribution to Christian-Hindu Dialogue in its own right. It will be a valuable investment for anyone interested in interreligious relations and doubtless that will mean all those interested in Christian mission.

ERT (2006) 30:3, 281-283

Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions

Amos Yong

Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003
ISBN 1-84227-208-4;
Pb pp205 Indices

*Reviewed by Keith Warrington, Regents
Theological College, England*

Writing as a Pentecostal and Professor of Theology (Regent University, Virginia Beach), Amos Yong posits a ‘pneumatological theology of religions’ as providing a contribution that may help in inter-faith dialogue. Given this premise, he broaches the question as to whether the Spirit is at work only in and through the church. Undergirding what will be a complex matrix of ideas and dialogue is a practical issue relating to the eternal destiny of the unevangelised. Briefly exploring exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism, he concludes that each is determined by Christian assumptions concerning soteri-

ology and christology and is thus less helpful when applied to a theology of religions.

He establishes the importance of a pneumatological theology, briefly identified as the quest to explore that which the Spirit has been doing, is doing and will do, as a result of which he concludes that the Spirit is busier in more contexts than many have assumed. Thereafter, he makes his case for a pneumatological approach to a theology of religions on the basis that it is fully trinitarian. He then provides three axioms that are foundational to his thesis: 'God is universally present and active in the Spirit', 'God's Spirit is the life-breath of the image Dei in every human being', and, more controversially, 'The religions of the world, like everything else that exists, are providentially sustained by the Spirit of God for divine purposes'.

As a result of the latter perspective, he rejects the notion that 'the religions lie beyond the pale of divine presence and activity', partly because the Spirit 'leads the quest for truth amidst all those who are searching for it'. He emphasizes that to concentrate on the presence of the Spirit in other religions should not de-emphasize the centrality of Christ to salvation or undermine the role of evangelism. His task is to find a way to dialogue with other religions in their quest for 'otherness' rather than to provide a means of evangelising their members. Although there is a connectedness between dialogue and conversion between Christianity and other faiths, it is possible that the one can occur without the other and that the event still be a positive development and not a failure.

He is aware that in advocating a pneumatological paradigm, there is the danger that the normativeness of Christ as mediator of salvation may be undermined. At

the same time, he is aware that where the latter is stressed in inter-faith dialogue, such dialogue breaks down irretrievably. A pneumatological approach, however, allows for the possibility of dialogue that is less threatening, given the assumption of 'the Spirit's "saving presence" and "saving power" in the non-Christian faiths'.

As well as devoting forty-five pages to exploring the views of those who have trod a similar path, he advocates a more robust pneumatological approach to a theology of religions. In the final two chapters, he returns to affirm the three axioms outlined earlier and presents a framework for discerning the presence of the Spirit. After examining a number of biblical texts where the concept of 'discernment' is included, he promotes charismatic and phenomenological discernment as essential criteria in determining the presence of the Spirit. In this regard, one may hear what the Spirit may say internally and also what experience and outward manifestations may offer to the determining of the conclusion, though he notes that a dogmatic method cannot be devised that determines for certain where the Spirit is or is not.

This is a complex book dealing with an important topic, the argument proposed being controversial but significant with regard to inter-faith dialogue—especially if the premise is right, that the Spirit is already working throughout the world in all areas of life, including religion, where people are seeking for ultimate truth. It will be of particular value to postgraduate level students as well as theologians and those involved in inter-faith dialogue. Given its importance to all believers and especially those who advocate a significant role to the Spirit, it would be of benefit if it could be also presented in a more accessible fashion for a broader reader-

ship. It would be a shame for this to be read and appreciated mainly by professors and preferable if it could be adapted to a wider audience who may be put off by the detailed argumentation and who may assume incorrectly, gleaned from a cursory glance at a few pages, that this is advocating a flexible universalism. It is in reality, well researched, tightly argued, developed in partnership with the thoughts of others and thoughtfully promoted.

The author is to be commended for his willingness to risk misunderstanding in order to progress to a fuller appreciation of the flexibility and creativity of the Spirit throughout the world, including areas where it may have been assumed he could not or would not enter.

ERT (2006) 30:3, 283-285

Above all Earthly Pow'rs Christ in a Postmodern World

David F. Wells

Grand Rapids/Leicester:
Eerdmans/Inter-Varsity, 2005
ISBN 0-8028-2902-3
ISBN 1-844474-106-0
Hb, pp 339, Bibliog. Index

*Reviewed by David Parker, Editor,
Evangelical Review of Theology*

Above all Earthly Pow'rs, David Wells' fourth volume in a series which began in 1993 with *No Place for Truth*, offers a forceful re-statement of orthodox Reformed teaching over against postmodern values. Wells feels this is especially necessary because of the failure of evangelicalism to respond properly to this challenge. He claims that instead of confronting postmodernism with a Christian world view which exalts the lordship of Christ, evangelicals have typically com-

promised and sold out to the contemporary cultural values.

The views of these evangelicals are not always discussed in great detail, but devastating evaluations (often in footnotes) are made of people like Donald McGavran, Gordon McDonald, Brian McLaren, Middleton and Walsh, and Stanley Grenz. However, Wells does devote extended treatment to Pinnock and Open Theism, faulted not only for departing from Calvinism but also for 'flirting with the old, discredited Christ-of-culture position which brought Liberal Protestants to such a sorry end' (p. 248). Then in the closing stages of the book, special attention is given to the seeker-oriented Willow Creek Church and its founder, Bill Hybels, and the new way of 'doing church' which he has pioneered.

The first two chapters traverse the well-trodden path of the former dominance of modernism and the transition to postmodernism, although Wells puts his own interpretation on this situation. For example, he argues that it would be 'quite unrealistic' to think that the elitist philosophy of the Enlightenment somehow trickled down to popular culture; instead, he argues that the extraordinary power of modernism is to be explained by 'the modernization of our world, which has produced its own psychological environment which parallels the intellectual climate of the Enlightenment' (p 58). He argues the same for the relation between postmodernity (the intellectual movement) and postmodernism (popular culture), querying 'what is often left unexplained is how we get from Foucault to MTV, from Derrida to the centerless young people whose canopy of meaning in life has collapsed, from Fish and Rorty to our movies' (p 65). He sees postmodernism, with its lack of a comprehensive worldview and purpose, and with no place

for truth, as part of 'a major shift in mood and outlook' in the culture, which nevertheless is not 'deep enough, and decisive enough to have established a clean breach with modernity' (p 66).

Another chapter deals with the impact of changes to US laws in 1965 which permitted immigration from non-European countries, thus introducing into the American scene an entirely new cultural component—non-Christian religions and cultures from 'the south' and from 'the east'. This new multi-religious environment has created an unprecedented missionary opportunity within the American society itself, but Wells considers that, judging by the ethnic composition of many churches, it has been generally squandered by evangelicalism. This new multi-cultural phenomenon, coupled with post-modernism, has also led to the appearance in the US of new forms of spirituality—which is a highly significant new factor calling for the attention of evangelicalism. These new spiritualities, the author claims, are a manifestation of the paganism which flourished in the early Christian centuries and appeared then in the form of Gnosticism.

After giving this wide-ranging cultural analysis, Wells turns to a positive presentation, showing how Christ and the gospel of grace answer the new spiritualities of the multi-religious culture, and the meaninglessness and loss of focus so characteristic of postmodernism. This part of the argument provides an opportunity for Wells to reinforce many of the familiar doctrinal themes, such as judgement for the sinfulness of humankind, justification by faith, eschatology, divine revelation and the authority of Scripture.

Wells then turns to the main thesis of the book, the failure of the new forms of consumer-oriented church and worship, as typified by the Hybels-led seeker move-

ment, to provide authentic answers to the problems caused by postmodernism and multi-culturalism: 'Far from challenging this emptiness and futility, evangelical churches have too often been its exemplars... pitching their "product" to "consumers" and emptying themselves of every vestige of spiritual *gravitas* as if striving for a serious faith were a failing of great magnitude and one to be avoided at all costs' (p 47). He argues that the innovative methodology introduced by the seeker churches sells out to postmodern values, and is inimical to doctrinal integrity. This leads to a loss of authenticity because there is no truth claim at the foundation of this approach, which, Wells argues, is precisely the problem facing postmodernism.

This is a particularly serious challenge for those who claim to be biblically-based Christians, because, like liberal Protestants of earlier times, they have compromised the gospel truth. Their 'airy indifference to the place of biblical doctrine' has led to a situation where there is 'a disconnect between the biblical orthodoxy which is professed and the assumption off which seeker churches are building themselves. Seeker methodology rests upon the Pelagian view that human beings are not inherently sinful.... that in their disposition to God and his Word postmoderns are neutral, [and] that they can be seduced into making the purchase of faith even as they can into making any other kind of purchase'. Wells laments that it would be 'quite foolish to think that using what was once a dreaded word—Pelagian—to describe all of this would create dismay' because evangelicals are 'deliberately undoctinal' and their 'criterion of "truth" by which seeker habits of church building should be tested is simply the pragmatic one, Is this working?' (p 299).

Written in a post-9/11 context, this, the final volume in Wells' provocative series (which also includes *God in the Wasteland*, 1994, and *Losing our Virtue*, 1998—all reviewed in this journal—see vols. 18/4, 22/1, 23/2), fittingly refers to the person of Christ as the hope of the world. The author's passion for this subject and his frequent sermonic touches may therefore be readily understood. This topic alone could have provided material for an entire volume, but it is only one thread in this work. Although almost exclusively focused on the American scene, readers in other contexts will find one of the other themes, the analysis of the post-modern culture, stimulating. However, neither this cultural analysis or the presentation of a strongly Christological gospel are the main burdens of the book even though they take up much of its space and are reflected formally in the subtitle.

The author's main concern, as in his earlier volumes, is with the evangelical church. But even though there is trenchant criticism of its methods and values, which go hand in hand with the view that this church is doctrinally challenged, the reader looks in vain for practical suggestions about alternative ways of 'doing church' in today's world, using methods based on the conventional doctrinal principles advocated by this book.

ERT (2006) 30:3, 285-286

Treasures Old and New: Essays in the Theology of the Pentateuch

Joseph Blenkinsopp

Grand Rapids/Cambridge:

Eerdmans, 2004

ISBN 0-8028-2679-2 Pb

Pb, pp228 Indexes

Reviewed by Joseph Too Shao, Biblical Seminary of the Philippines, Metro-Manila, Philippines

Joseph Blenkinsopp is a well-known scholar and professor of the Old Testament. The book is a collection of his essays published over the last four decades. The essays reflect his interpretive skills as a seasoned exegete of the Old Testament. The book complements his previously published work *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1992).

The book has twelve chapters, dealing with some of the author's own interests and research. He revised a few chapters that he contributed before, but some of the chapters have not been published elsewhere. As a candid interpreter of the biblical text, he explicitly states that his methodology is both critical as well as 'basically conservative'. He is doubtful of 'readerly' approaches to biblical texts. He is to be commended for his many original thinking and fresh approach to some theological themes in the Pentateuch.

As a knowledgeable scholar, he is very aware of issues regarding construction of the past in Ancient Israel as seen in his discussion on the topic of memory and tradition (chapter 1). Oral tradition and writing do have their own respective contributions, and they are mutually exclusive. In his view, historians are not the

principal custodians of society's memories. In the case of Deuteronomistic History, the Levites as religious educators were responsible to transmit collective memory. He shows his interests in understanding the problems of biblical narratives in dealing with the biographical patterns in the narrative (chapter 9), and also with the issues inherent in the Sinai-Horeb narrative (chapter 10). The author offers his reconstruction of events which really happened at Sinai. He presents an original reflection that Aaron led the group to 'sacrifice, eat, drink, and participate in an orgiastic ritual' (p. 169). Thus the Levites are never called 'sons of Aaron' in Deuteronomy.

The subject matters are wide in scope. He presents OT Theology with its Jewish roots and other historical debates as a Christian scripture (chapter 2). With sensitivity to the texts and their applications, he deals with the important issue of creation and care for a damaged world (chapter 3), and sacrifice and social maintenance in Ancient Israel (chapter 4). Moreover, he argues that Deuteronomy is the first canonical biblical text, and the Deuteronomy legislation is directed against the cult of death (chapter 11).

With his understanding of Ancient Near Eastern texts, he clearly presents the religion of Israel in its setting (chapter 5). He also compares and discusses the stories of Gilgamesh and Adam, sharing the theme of the lost opportunity of immortality (chapter 6). With his interest in post-biblical haggadic midrash, Genesis 18:22-33 is discussed in its rabbinic contexts (chapter 8). Canonicity is presented in its Christian milieu, and also its related Jewish traditions (chapter 12).

The author calls his book a 'little sketch-book of biblical theology' (p. ix). Indeed, it deals with many aspects of biblical theology in the Pentateuch. The author is a

careful and sensitive interpreter of biblical texts. He usually first states issues related to the topic under discussion and its existing interpretations before offering his ideas. He offers many new insights into important topics in the Pentateuch.

Although his discussions are wide and in-depth, there are some portions of the Pentateuch that he focuses on more than others. Creation and its related issues on mankind are discussed in three chapters (chapters 3, 6, 7), which means one-fourth of his book. His perceptive mind works on issues related to narratives which are keys to understanding the Pentateuch (chapters 9, 10). Being trained and well-versed in critical methodologies, he discusses issues of Priestly and Deuteronomistic writings, and also issues between oral tradition and written canon. Since canonicity is a significant issue in the Pentateuch, he is to be commended in presenting his thoughts on this topic that only few scholars are qualified to discuss.

Although his arguments on the politics of postmortem existence and Deuteronomic prohibitions could be correct, I find them wanting and disturbing. Additional investigations are needed on this neglected topic.

The author's honesty in his methodology is admirable. If a reader would like to find a straightjacket to his inquiry of theology in the Pentateuch, then the book is not suitable for him. If however, he is searching for an honest guide to some issues of theology in the Pentateuch, then this book is suitable for him. I strongly recommend this book to both the learner, as well as the specialist of Old Testament.

David Wenham: *Paul and Jesus: The True Story*. London: SPCK, 2002. ISBN 0-281-05480-0. Paper, 195 pages, Indexes,

In this book, the author writes at a popular level to disprove the idea that Paul was a 'freelancer who did his own thing with the Christian religion', ignoring the teaching and example of its founder, Jesus Christ. Wenham shows how much of Paul's teaching is similar verbally and thematically to that of Jesus, and how historically consistent his letters are with the material in Acts. The author uses a chronological approach to study the first four letters of Paul (with only very brief treatment of the remainder). He gives special emphasis to the impact of Paul's Damascus Road experience on his subsequent thinking, and employs a 'mirror' style of approach to reconstruct (as a detective would) the situation existing in each of these churches. However, although he suggests that some reconstructions are only speculative due to the lack of information, the cumulative effect of so many instances creates the impression of more certainty than really exists, despite the disclaimers. But overall this is a book which repays careful study and offers many useful insights to understanding 'the true story' of Paul and of Jesus.

Reviewed by David Parker, Editor of *Evangelical Review of Theology*

Christine A. Mallouhi, *Miniskirts, Mothers and Muslims: A Christian Women in a Muslim Land*. Oxford: Monarch Books, 2004 (rev. ed.) Paper, 184 pages, Bibliography. ISBN 1-85424-662-3

Miniskirts, Mothers and Muslims, written by an Australian woman married to an Arab Christian from a conservative Muslim background, aims to help people, especially women, who want to 'live honourably among Muslims for Christ's sake'. It consists of dozens of anecdotes mainly related to personal and family life, only very loosely organized around themes such as 'Living with Veils', 'Living with Stereotypes', 'Living with Segregation' and 'Living with Hospitality'. Backed by more than thirty years living in many different Middle East countries, as well as in multi-cultural Australia, the author effectively shares many of the finer points and potential pitfalls which can occur when differing cultures encounter each other. Many stories come from the author's own experiences, while others are reported from elsewhere. This revised version of an earlier publication is not only invaluable for those planning to live in such a culture, but fascinating to anyone who wants an insider's view of cross-cultural issues. A useful by-product is the help it gives biblical readers because of the light thrown on cultures similar to those depicted in Scripture.

Reviewed by David Parker, Editor, *Evangelical Review of Theology*

Thomas C. Oden and J. I. Packer: *One Faith: The Evangelical Consensus*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004. ISBN 0-8308-3239-4. Hb, 223 pp

Oden and Packer have done evangelicalism a valuable service in this work, affirming and outlining its underlying unity contra a reputation for fragmentation. Drawing upon a wide array of trans-denominational and international confessions, they posit a remarkable coherence among evangelicals regarding 'primary' doctrines. As senior statesmen of the evangelical movement they are uniquely qualified for this endeavour, representing (some

would say) opposite ends of the evangelical spectrum (Wesleyan and Calvinist). Their collaboration is itself indicative of the unity they further affirm. Oden and Packer's own analysis of and vision for evangelical unity strengthens the work substantially. Some repetitiveness is evident but this is a very readable book.

However, while *One Faith* takes an important step toward not only affirming but also advancing evangelical unity, it does not deal with what its authors consider 'secondary' doctrines that admittedly involve controversy. Is the alleged unity substantive when it is decided in advance to ignore diversity? How contemporary evangelicals deal with differences says something too. Nevertheless, the distinction between 'primary' and 'secondary' status issues is an ancient and useful one, potentially capable of carrying the burden and blessing of diversity. Though not a specifically scholarly work, students of evangelicalism as well as evangelical laity and clergy will benefit from this book.

This review, Tony Richie, Knoxville, TN, USA, was previously published by *Religious Studies Review* Vol. 30, no. 4 (Oct. 2004), p. 290 and is used with permission.

REGNUM STUDIES IN MISSION

Mission Possible

Biblical Strategies for Reaching the Lost

Julie Ma

Written as Julie Ma hiked the mountains to share God's news, this is a missiology book for the church which liberates missiology from the specialists for every believer.

Nevertheless, it serves as a textbook that is simple and friendly, and yet solid in biblical interpretation. This book links the biblical teaching to the actual and contemporary missiological setting, thus serving two important purposes. Examples are clearly given which aid understanding, and the biblical development is brought in to our contemporary setting, thus making the Bible come alive.

Julie C. Ma teaches Intercultural Studies at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, Baguio, Philippines, and is Editor of the Journal of Asian Mission

1-870345-37-1 / 229x152mm / 158pp / £19.99

Christians Meeting Hindus

Bob Robinson

An Analysis and Theological Critique of the Hindu-Christian Encounter in India This book focuses on the Hindu-Christian encounter, especially the intentional meeting called dialogue, mainly during the last four decades of the twentieth century, and mainly in India itself.

Bob Robinson teaches at Tyndale Graduate School of Theology, New Zealand

1-870345-39-8 / 229x152mm / 410pp / £24.99

Regnum Books, 9 Holdom Avenue, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK1 1QR, UK

ABSTRACTS/INDEXING

This journal is abstracted in Religious and Theological Abstracts, 121 South College Street (P.O. Box 215), Myerstown, PA 17067, USA, and in the Christian Periodical Index, P.O. Box 4, Cedarville, OH 45314, USA.

It is also indexed in the ATLA Religion Database, published by the American Theological Library Association, 250 S. Wacker Dr., 16th Flr., Chicago, Illinois 60606-5834 USA, E-mail: atla@atla.com, Web: www.atla.com/

MICROFORM

This journal is available on Microform from UMI, 300 North Zeeb Road, P.O. Box 1346, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346, USA. Phone: (313)761-4700

Subscription rates

Period	Institutions			Individuals		
	UK	USA & Canada	Elsewhere Overseas	UK	USA & Canada	Elsewhere Overseas
One Year	£30.00	\$78.80	£31.60	£30.00	\$51.20	£31.60
Two/Three Years, per year	£27.00	\$70.90	£28.40	£27.00	\$46.10	£28.40

2/3rds world, individuals and institutions:
50% discount on the overseas sterling (£) rates listed above.

All subscriptions to:
Paternoster Periodicals, PO Box 300, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 0QS, UK
Tel: UK 0800 195 7969; Fax: 01228 51 49 49
Tel Overseas: +44(0) 1228 611723; Fax +44(0) 1228 514949
Email pp@stl.org
Web Site: www.authenticmedia.co.uk/paternoster

Important Note to all Postal Subscribers

When contacting our Subscription Office in Carlisle for any reason **always quote your Subscription Reference Number.** This appears on the address label used to send your copies to you.

Photocopying Licensing

No part of the material in this journal may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of Paternoster Periodicals, except where a licence is held to make photocopies.

Applications for such licences should be made to the Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9HE.

It is illegal to take multiple copies of copyright material.

REGNUM STUDIES IN MISSION

Christology in Dialogue with Muslims A Critical Analysis of Christian Presentations of Christ for Muslims from the Ninth and Twentieth Centuries

I. Mark Beaumont

This book analyses Christian presentations of Christ for Muslims in the most creative periods of Christian-Muslim dialogue, the first half of the ninth century and the second half of the twentieth century. In these two periods, Christians made serious attempts to present their faith in Christ in terms that take into account Muslim perceptions of him, with a view to bridging the gap between Muslim and Christian convictions.

Mark Beaumont is Director of Mission Studies at Birmingham Christian College, UK

1-870345-46-0 / 229x152mm / 254pp / £19.99

Leadership Expectations

How Executive Expectations are Created and Used in a Non-Profit Setting

Gene Early

The author creates an Expectation Enactment Analysis to study the role of the Chancellor of the University of the Nations-Kona, Hawaii, and is grounded in the field of managerial work, jobs, and behaviour, drawing on symbolic interactionism, role theory, role identity theory, and enactment theory. The result is a conceptual framework for further developing an understanding of managerial roles.

Gene Early works in leadership transformation from his base in Washington DC, USA

1-870345-30-4 / 229x152mm / 300pp / £19.99



Regnum Books

9 Holdom Avenue, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK1 1QR, UK